

Authority NND 735017
By LNARA Date 9-7-10S E C R E TEIGHTY THIRD SIGNAL COMPANY
A P O 83
United States Army

1 June 1945

SUBJECT: After Action Report.

TO : Commanding General, 83rd Infantry Division,
APO 83, U. S. Army.

1. Transmitted herewith After Action Report for this organization for the month of May 1945, in compliance with letter Hqs 83rd Inf Div dated 11 April 1945.

Marion L. Hardey
MARION L. HARDEY,
Capt, Signal Corps,
Commanding.

319.1/401 1st Ind.
HEADQUARTERS 83D INFANTRY DIVISION, APO 83, U. S. Army, 15 June 1945.

TO: Commanding General, XIII Corps, APO 163, US Army.
(Attention: Adjutant General).

Forwarded.

For the Commanding General:

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

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AP-10.3

CLASSIFICATION

CANCELLED

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OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
1. DING COMMITTEE

Authority NND 735017
By KLARA Date 9-7-10S E C R E TEIGHTY THIRD SIGNAL COMPANY
A P O 83
United States ArmyS T R E N G T H:

May 1, 1945: 10 Officers
 4 Warrant Officers
 280 Enlisted Men

May 31, 1945: 19 Officers
 4 Warrant Officers
 273 Enlisted Men

S T A T I O N S:

<u>Station</u>	<u>Arrived</u>	<u>Departed</u>
Calbe, Germany		May 6, 1945
Wernigerode, Germany	May 6, 1945	May 11, 1945
Bad Harzburg, Germany	May 11, 1945	

A T T A C H M E N T S:

168th Signal Photo Detachment - 1 Officer, 4 Enlisted Men

XIII Corps Wire Team - 1 Officer, 28 Enlisted Men

310th Signal Company - 5 Enlisted Men

Background:

On the 1st of May the Division was occupying the area of the bridgehead and along the Elbe having linked up with the Russians on the 1st. As a part of XIX Corps under Ninth Army, the Signal Company had Corps Wire and Radio link teams, and an army photo team attached. The Signal Company was at the Division Command Post except for the regimental teams of Radio and Construction, the Signal Supply and Repair Sections which were attached to the Quartermaster, and the Rear which was in the same town but was a separate installation.

Movement of the Forward Echelon

The company moved only two times during the month of May. In all, it moved about 66 miles.

Having arrived at Calbe, Germany on April 13, 1945, the company remained there until May 6th at which time it moved to Wernigerode, Germany, arriving there at 1225 hours the same day.

On May 11, 1945, the company moved from Wernigerode, Germany to Bad Harzburg, Germany, arriving at 1400 hours and remaining in this town for the rest of the month.

Construction:

The Division Command Post was located in the town of Calbe, Germany. There was very little activity from May 1st until May 4th. On May 4th, two wire teams consisting of 9 men each, laid two circuits to the Russian Division Command Post which the 83rd Infantry Division made contact with. These circuits were completed in 8 hours by the two teams. The circuits were 35 miles long, 90% of them being commercial wire.

On May 5th, three teams were sent out to recover some spiral four cable which was laid for former installations. In three hours 40 drums of this cable were recovered.

On May 7th, the Division Command Post moved to the town of Wernigerode, Germany. There, on the area of the Elbe River, we were relieved by the Russian Army. On this new area for the first time, in all the work of the construction section, no field wire was used to make the installations. 95% of the whole set-up was installed by the use of underground cable. Our longest lines were 80 miles long, all consisting of underground cable. Considering the length of the lines, they were in good talking condition.

On May 8th, two circuits were laid by one wire team to the 643 Tank Destroyer Battalion. No cable was available in this area so field wire, W-110, had to be laid. These two circuits were laid through the Harz Mountains, and were fourteen miles long.

On May 9th, this field wire was replaced by German cable which was captured in the town of Viernburg. This was a big improvement for the talking circuits. Two 45-mile underground cables were used for communication with Diode.

Two circuits to the 331 Infantry Regiment were 20 miles long, 75% of which were open wire. Two circuits to 330 Infantry Regiment, 30 miles long, were 90% open wire. Two circuits to 329 Infantry Regiment were 35 miles long, all underground cable. Two lateral circuits laid between Division Artillery and 308 Engineer Battalion were 30 miles in length and consisted of all underground cable.

On May 11th, the Division Command post moved to Bad Harzburg, Germany. This was a better set-up for maintaining our circuits.

Me too.

My platoon

and field

WIRE W-110

across the

Elbe River

Bridge constructed by the engineers. I

crossed

The bridge

to maintain

phone lines on

the other

side for

several

days

until we

were pulled

back

and

The

Russians

moved up

to the

Elbe.

circuits were cut down in length making the talking range better.

SECTION 1. The purpose of this act is to provide for the better regulation of the telephone service in the District of Columbia and the Territory of Alaska.

SECTION 2. The Board of Commissioners of the District of Columbia and the Board of Commissioners of the Territory of Alaska are authorized to make and enforce such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this act.

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Since all lines at Goslar were terminated in the telephone exchange at Goslar, it was necessary to install a switch there in order to operate to the Division Command Post. This necessitated repairing four open wire lines from Goslar to Bad Harzburg which was done in five hours by two 5-man teams.

Two lateral lines were laid May 10th between 329 Infantry Regiment and 308 Engineer Battalion. These circuits were all underground cable, 8 miles long.

On May 11th, plans were made to get all circuits directly into the Division Command Post board by eliminating the switch. It was decided to use underground cable for the job. On this date one wire team, with the assistance of 9 civilian cable splicers, began repairing the cable from Goslar to Bad Harzburg.

On May 12th, 12 hours were spent in repairing the cable. A bad section of cable, 125 feet long, had to be replaced. Cable was obtained from Army Headquarters.

On May 14th, the job was completed and 30 pairs of underground cable were put in use between Goslar and Bad Harzburg.

On May 15th, one team was sent to Goslar to cut all circuits coming into the switch directly to the Division Command Post board. This job was done in two hours.

On May 16th and 17th all regimental wire teams were called back to the company area. On all cases of trouble the lines were repaired by teams from this end of the circuit. We were also assisted by the regimental wire men.

From May 18th until this time there was very little work to be done on our circuits.

On May 22nd, two circuits were installed to the town of Vienenburg for the new location of the 643 Tank Destroyer Command Post. The old set-up was taken over by the 280 Field Artillery. These two new circuits were all cable which was put in working order in two hours.

Telephone and Telegraph Section:

On May first the section was operating at Calbe, Germany. This installation consisted of Two TC-4s and teletype to XIX Corps.

On May 6th, a displacement team left to install a new command post at Wernigerode. The existing commercial system was utilized for all the locals. Several tests were made on this installation and it proved to be unsatisfactory. A very fast and neat installation was then made with section equipment. Two boards were installed and twenty six locals and twenty four trunks were laid.

On May 8th, three men left to install a switch at Goslar. They had all of the regimental trunks and others that were unable to be cut through to Blackstone.

On May 10th, a displacement team left to install a division command post at Bad Harzburg. The commercial lines were used to a great extent and a very neat and semi-permanent installation was made. The installation consisted of fifty-two locals and twenty-seven trunks.

On May 14th, a teletype team was sent to Division Artillery to install and operate teletype to division. This is the first time teletype has been used to a subordinate unit. *over*

The installation was turned over to the 2nd Armored Division at Bad Harzburg.

Since the 10th, all teams of the section are combined and are operating as one team. This is the first time all teams of the section have operated as one group since leaving England.

Message Center

Section:

On the first of May the division was in Calbe, Germany. Operations continued as normal with two scheduled messenger runs daily and one to Corps. The section was otherwise busy with the company I & E Program.

On May 6th and 7th, the division moved to Wernigerode, Germany and transferred to the XIII Corps. The same messenger runs were used to divisional units but the corps messages were delivered by a corps liaison plane three times daily, eliminating our run by messenger.

On May 12th, the division moved to Bad Harzburg, Germany. All messenger runs were now made by liaison plane, both division and corps. Division Artillery furnished three planes with pilots for the two scheduled divisional runs daily. On days when the weather did not permit, five jeeps were necessary to make each run due to the distance of the units.

The section was engaged in company I & E Program as much as possible. The possibility of losing key men in the section was balanced by a training of code clerks and message center clerks during sectional duties. A reshuffling of personnel was made in the section for the purpose of training and better efficiency.

The rear echelon was eliminated on the 14th of May and the entire section was operating one message center for the first time since England.

A small detachment operated at Waggum airport for five days but returned to the section as the division was relieved of its duties there.

Radio Section:

Radio headquarters had once again moved back to the Signal Company and on May first there were five complete teams in twenty-four hour continuous operation. The Division Command Net was maintained. There were subordinate stations at the 329, 330, and 331 Infantry Regiments. Operations were also made in the XIX Corps net. At this time the Russian Armies were rapidly nearing division forward positions, and their radio communication was readily intercepted by both our corps and command nets. Establishing communication was forbidden, although this friendly junction was an envied prize and readily available to the skilled operators. After a few days of anxious monitoring, Russian forces made contact with First Army Troops and a party from the 329 Infantry Regiment was sent out to make liaison for the 83rd Division. Contact having been established, it was desired to have a semi-permanent liaison effected with the Russians, and Sgt Ned R. Foltz team was dispatched to this mission. Thoroughly dependable and efficient communication was established and upheld, and during this period the radio headquarters section was inspected by Signal Officers from Russian headquarters, who expressed much satisfaction and admiration at the smooth organization and efficiency of our division's radio network.

In this same period, two teams were called to provide communication for a mass prisoner reclamation and both operated in German

Radio's special missions accumulated rapidly, and, operating short-handed, it was no small effort to maintain constant radio watch with no single lapse in communication and yet provide liaison teams for so many and varied causes. This same short handedness was somewhat relieved by three replacements, who were equipped at headquarters and dispatched to fill vacancies in the detached regimental teams. The transfer of personnel had only been completed when the Signal Company and radio headquarters moved west to Wernigerode, and billeted in a large school. Communication was conducted with more difficulty due to local atmospheric and electrical disturbances in this new location, but constant communication was maintained. Corps net handled volumes of traffic usually routed over teletype, as radio provided the sole means of communication with our new corps, the Thirteenth.

A new station was introduced in the division command net when a team was sent to represent the division at the 453 AAA, an attached unit. Shortly after, the signal company moved to the mountain resort of Bad Harzburg. Radio reception and transmitting efficiency rose in relation to the height, and although distances between outlying elements of the division were substantially increased, constant communication was observed via radio. Greater distances present problems peculiar to radio, and it is a tribute to the technical efficiency of the radio section that at no time has communication failed because of it. A system of special antennae adaptation has been adopted, after engineering and experimentation by radio section chiefs. That increases range and efficiency of army sets, and insures dependable communication even under the most difficult conditions.

S-Sgt James J. Smith's team provided liaison radio with a division staging party at Braunshweig, and after successful operation returned to radio headquarters to assist in a complete change of section vehicles. Command and reconnaissance cars being declared obsolete, the radio platoon was presented with the problem of changing seven complete installations from those to new 3/4 ton weapons carriers, modified to accept installation of the SCR-193. The change was completed with some difficulty, due to the distances encountered in relieving teams, and the necessity of providing a never failing, continuously operating, radio communication net between all elements of the division.

Mess Section: The mess section operations were carried on as normal. The prime thoughts being to serve good hot meals to personnel of the company. Over 300 men were being fed three meals a day during the month of May, and this situation was handled very well by the mess even though, at times, the situation was trying. Only two moves were made during the month and the mess was well set up for both of them. A team is always ready to move with the advance elements of the company thereby making it possible to have hot meals always.

Motor Section: The month of May was one of renovation for the motor section. Taking advantage of a lull in operations, they painted 22 vehicles and did other work which they did not have time for while the company was in constant movement. On the 25th, all German vehicles and trailers that the company had accumulated during their drive from Omaha Beach to the Elbe River were turned in to Army Ordnance. Routine inspections and maintenance were carried on every day of the month.

S E C R E T

Supply Section: The work of company supply increased tremendously because of the termination of hostilities and the lull in tactical activities.

All sections of the company reduced the clothing and equipment of their men to T/E requirements. A lot of excess clothing and equipment was turned in to division quartermaster. A trip was made to the division quartermaster every day for the purpose of turning in excess and salvage and picking up shortages. Gratuitous issue of PX supplies and other routine duties were also carried on. During the latter part of the month, a complete physical inventory was taken of all company equipment.

Division Signal
Officer Section:

The division signal office carried on normal duties of publishing and distributing S.O.I.s and traffic diagrams to all units of the division. The radio news was and still is being published and distributed. The section was getting a well deserved rest after last month's tedious and nerve wracking grind.

Division Signal
Supply Section:

The division signal supply section, which up until the 20th of the month were located at division quartermaster, returned to the company fold. The section made three moves during the month utilizing 9 quartermaster trucks and their own two trucks and five german vehicles. The german vehicles were turned in to Army ordnance on the 25th so future moves will have to be made with company trucks. Seven trips were made to depots at Brunswick and Monster to pick up signal equipment. At this time the different units of the division were turning in their excess signal equipment and four trips were made to Monster to turn this excess equipment in. This turning in of excess equipment brought difficulties because all of the equipment had to be checked for serviceability and boxed before it could be turned in. This kept the section quite busy the entire month.

Repair Sections: The repair sections were kept very busy during the month, catching up on work that ~~was~~ could not be done last month due to the fast moving situation. This work that piled up on them was, in time taken care of. The Telephone and Telegraph repair section turned out 53 jobs which consisted of everything from a handset to TC-4 switchboard. A 50 drop german switchboard was worked on and set up for the 331 Infantry Regiment.

The radio repair section repaired approximately 80 radio sets besides installing two public address systems during the month. They also had to check all excess radio equipment that was turned in, for serviceability and make any repairs that could be made. Besides all this repair work, the section carried on normal check-ups and preventative maintenance on other equipment.

The Division made 18 moves in 16 days.