

Hq 327th Engr Combat Bn
After Action Report

6571

a. From the S-3 Standpoint:

1 March 1945: Herewith follows an account of the operations of the battalion following the crossing of the Roer River.

At 0945 message was received from Div Hq requesting that a road crater in Erkelenz be filled and that the road shoulders between Hardt and Rhiendahlen be swept for mines. This request was relayed to the 1141 Engr Gp who arranged for the work to be done. At 0950 Company B, this battalion, reported the closing in at their new location in Hardt. At 1030 the 407 Inf Regt called for one of the supporting platoons which was sent out immediately. By 1500 the S-4 dump of mines was moved to a location south of Hardt. Capt Lacy, S-2 who had gone to Div Hq for information on the Niers Canal returned at 1830 with the following information. The 405 Inf was across the Niers Canal on the right, the 406 Inf on the left and the 5th Armored Div at FO92968. He also stated that the 102 Inf Div was to put a treadway bridge and foot-bridge across at FO77982 during the night of 1 Mar - 2 Mar. The 1141 Engr Gp was called to determine how much footbridge equipment was available and also to locate treadway bridge equipment. At this time Maj Pitcairn, S-3, was sent to Co A, this battalion which was supporting the 405 Inf and Capt Lacy, S-2 to Co B which was supporting the 406 Inf to coordinate the operation. At 1930 the S-3 from the 1141 Engr Gp called and stated that he had a platoon standing by to erect the treadway bridge and that he also had a bulldozer ready to move.

2 March 1945: The battalion moved its CP from Erkelenz to Viersen, arriving there at approximately 1330. Capt Binder reported that the 22d Armored Engrs were available to this battalion to assist with the required engineer work. In the way of equipment they had dump trucks, one R-4 Dozer, one D-7 bulldozer, and a treadway bridge available for use. Lt Col Anderson decided to use the bulldozers to clear the streets of Viersen of rubble and the engineers to build a treadway trestle bridge over the Niers canal. At 1500 the Reconnaissance Officer of the 22d Armored Engineers was notified of the plans for the use of his equipment. At 1530 Co B, this battalion was notified to release the two treadway trucks which were attached to them 1 March 1945. These trucks were later picked up by the CO, 989 Treadway Bridge Co. At 1600 1141 Engr Gp was notified about removing ammunition loaded carts from the vicinity of div hq. A message was received from Major Suffield, through Capt Binder that they had a number of safes he wanted opened. The battalion Commander replied that the battalion was occupied otherwise, but that Ordnance could probably open them for him. At 2000 Maj Burlson released the two treadway loads which were attached to Co A and instructed the drivers to return to their Co. Co A reported that the Inf Support Bridge at FO92967 was completed during the afternoon as planned.

CLASSIFIED

FORM 1032a, Sec. 3.3

NND 735017

by NND NARS Date 1975

Hq 327th Engr Combat Bn
After Action Report -
S-3 Standpoint Contd

3 March 1945: The battalion continued to furnish direct support to front line Inf units and at 0900 Co B reported that it had closed in at its new CP location in Krefeld. A quartering party was sent to Krefeld to locate buildings for the battalion CP and for Hq and Sv Co. Billets were located but it was later decided that the CP would remain in Viersen.

4. March 1945: Direct support was furnished to front line units by the battalion; and in addition to furnishing direct support to the Inf roads in the division sector were maintained; road blocks were removed; and demolitions charges were removed from a prepared bridge. All companies initiated a consolidation of their personnel and started a program for the care and maintenance of equipment.

5 March 1945: All companies continued their programs for the repair and maintenance of equipment and also held inspections to determine shortages of equipment. Early in the period a quartering party was again sent out to Krefeld to locate suitable facilities for the battalion CP and Hq and Sv Co. Billets were located and Bn Hq was moved arriving in Krefeld at approximately 1400.

6 March 1945: All companies continued their inspections of equipment; repair and maintenance of vehicles; also rehabilitation of personnel. Plans for instruction in the recognition of aircraft were begun and a load of German dynamite which was reported by 379 FA was disposed of by Co A.

7 March 1945: All companies initiated a program for the rehabilitation of personnel; care and maintenance of vehicles and equipment; and re-equipment of personnel. Arrangements were made with the 989th Treadway Bridge Co for the use of their floating bridge equipment, this equipment to be used for training combat companies in its use and method of fabrication. In compliance with a request from the 352 Ord for a bulldozer, Company C, this battalion was notified and they agreed to do the job.

8 March 1945: All companies continued their program of maintenance of vehicles and reequipment of troops. Co C completed the bulldozer job for the 352 Ord as scheduled. All companies were notified of the revoking of the order which set the speed limit of all vehicles at 20 MPH.

9 March 1945: The battalion continued its rehabilitation program and in compliance with request from the 102d Inf Div Reception Center, a detail from Co A was sent to clear two fields of mines. The 989 Treadway Bridge Co was notified that the battalion would no longer need the floating bridge equipment it had been getting for training purposes.

10 March 1945: All companies engaged in care and maint of equipment and reequipment of personnel. The Ord Bomb Disposal Team was contacted in regards to an unexploded shell reported by Co C and they agreed to send someone to examine it. An air-raid shelter in Krefeld was reconnoitered and a floor plan made to determine its suitability for storing duffel bags and miscellaneous impedimenta.

Hq 327th Engr Combat Bn
After Action Report -
S-3 Standpoint

11 March 1945: The entire battalion continued its program of rehabilitation of personnel and maintenance of equipment. Co A, this bn, with the use of explosives removed several trees which interfered with gun positions of the 381 FA. The 102d Inf Div Reception Center requested a bulldozer to do some work on a rifle range, vic Herdt. Maj Smith, 27^o Engr Bn was contacted and agreed to take over the job inasmuch as it was out of this battalion's area of responsibility. An inspection of all organic weapons of the battalion was held by Ord. The inspection proved very satisfactory.

12 March 1945: The battalion continued its program of rehabilitation of personnel; maintenance of equipment and reequipment of troops. Co B in compliance with a request from Div Hq, sandbagged the windows of the Div CP. Div Hq also requested a bulldozer to clear debris from vic Div Hq, which was in turn complied with. Capt Elliott reported location of a German Rifle Range which could be used for the range firing of small bore weapons. Co C initiated the work for the reconversion of the air-raid shelter for the purpose of storing duffel bags and miscellaneous impedimenta. Co C also supplied the boat crewmen necessary to ferry an Infantry Patrol across the Rhine River. The mission, however, due to the swiftness of the river was not completed.

13 March 1945: All companies continued their maintenance of equipment and rehabilitation of troops. Co C continued its work on the reconversion of the air-raid shelter. A reconnaissance patrol from the 407 Inf was ferried across the Rhine River by a crew from Co C.

14 March 1945: The battalion continued its program of rehabilitation and maintenance of equipment; and all companies participated in an inspection made by Maj Burleson of personnel and equipment. Co C continued work on the air-raid shelter, and also ferried an Inf patrol across the Rhine.

15 March 1945: Rehabilitation, rest, and reequipment of personnel was continued, along with maintenance of equipment. Co C continued its work on the air-raid shelter and also supplied the crewmen to ferry an Inf patrol across the Rhine River. Cos A and B made preparations for range firing all small bore weapons. A meeting of all Div S-3's was held by G-3 and plans for training men in deficient subjects were made. All units will submit daily to G-3 a summary of training to be conducted the following day.

16 March 1945: The Bn continued its rehabilitation and maintenance program; and plans for a training program were initiated. Co C, this battalion furnished two mine detector crews to clear a field for the 241 Med Bn. Said Co continued work on the re-converting of the air-raid shelter, but some difficulty was encountered with the electric power supply. In order to provide adequate light for working crews, battalion hq put the auxiliary Diesel generator set into service. Due to the fact that all the battalion organic bulldozers were too large to be taken inside the air-raid shelter, one R-4 bulldozer was borrowed from 1141 Engr Gp for the purpose of clearing rubble inside the bunker. Co B, this Bn, relieved Co C at the bunker at 1700A and worked until approximately 170200.

Hq 327th Engr Combat Bn
After Action Report-
S-3 Standpoint

16 March (Continued) Cos A and B accomplished the "zeroing in" of all their organic weapons except the bazooka and rifle, grenade launchers. Engineer boat crews for the purpose of ferrying Inf patrols across the Rhine River were furnished by Cos A And B.

17 March: The bn continued its program of rehabilitation and maintenance of vehicles and equipment and Co A continued the work on the air-raid shelter. A reconnaissance of bridges for prepared demolitions and obstacles was accomplished by all companies. Co B furnished 12 men as boat-crewmembers to the 406 Inf for patrolling action across the Rhine River. The patrols were fired upon by two machine guns just as they reached the far shore, thereby making it impossible to complete the mission. To date only three of the Engineer crewmen have returned. Co C "Zeroed in" all organic small bore weapons. An experimental utility boat, with an electric motor was tested in a nearby lake and the results proved very satisfactory. A speed of approximately 8 MPH could be obtained and it is believed that the boat will carry approximately 16 men. The boat was converted from gasoline power to electric power for the express purpose of having a silent powered boat to be used for patrols going across the Rhine River.

18 March: The bn continued its program for the care and maintenance of vehicles and equipment. Co A completed the work on the conversion of the air-raid shelter into a storage bunker for duffel bags and misc impediments. Co B furnished boat crews for Inf patrols going across the Rhine River and also reported the return of two more of the missing men lost on the previous night's patrolling attempt. The return of these two men brings the number of men unaccounted for to seven. Co C conducted organized athletics during the day and after dark assisted in the launching of the electric powered utility boat in the Ost Harbor. All companies accomplished the training as scheduled by S-3.

19 March: The bn continued its program of rehabilitation of personnel and maintenance of equipment in addition to the adherence to the training as scheduled by S-3. The interior of the storage bunker being completed, a detail from Co A was sent to complete the final policing of the exterior and surrounding grounds. In compliance with a directive from Ninth Army Hq Co C posted, in their assigned sector, bridge clearance signs. Co C also supplied Engineer boat crewmen to ferry a patrol from the 407 Inf across the Rhine River. The electric powered utility boat was used by the patrol and proved very satisfactory.

20 March: All companies continued their maintenance of equipment and vehicles; also conducted training as was scheduled by S-3. Arrangements were made with each company for them to each supply four dump trucks to haul Summerfeld track for 251 Engr C Bn on 21 Mar 45. Co C furnished two men to be boat crewmen for a patrol from "Roger's Raiders", but due to the fact that the electric powered utility boat had been hit during an enemy bombing, the patrol was called off. The boat sunk in the Rhine River, and cannot be recovered. Gun positions for 361 FA were dug and arrangements made to "dig in" the 379 FA on 21 Mar 45.

Hq 327th Engr Combat Bn
After Action Report
S-3 Standpoint

21 March: All companies continued their program of maintenance of equipment and vehicles; accomplished the training as scheduled; conducted a reconnaissance of the Rhine River shoreline in assigned sectors for possible ferry approaches; and each furnished four dump trucks apiece to haul Sommerfeld track for the 251 Engr C Bn. Approximately one-half of the hauling was completed, the remainder to be hauled 22 March. Gun positions for the 379 FA were dug and arrangements initiated for the procurement of another utility boat to replace the one lost 20 March 1945.

22 March: All companies completed the training as scheduled, and continued the program for the rehabilitation of personnel and equipment. A reconnaissance of approach roads to the Rhine River was also made by all companies. Bulldozer work was done for the 379 FA and the 381FA, both jobs consisting of digging gun positions.

23 March: The battalion continued its program of maintenance of equipment. Training in the use of the Infantry assault boat and ten man rubber rcn boat was given to the 406 Inf by Co B, and plans were initiated for giving the same training to the other Inf Regts. Basic Engineer training was given to personnel of this bn in preparation for the training tests to be given in the near future. Corduroy matting was fabricated by Co C and during the night laid same on Rhine River ferry approaches. Road maintenance was continued by Companies B and C.

24 March: Training as scheduled was accomplished by all companies. In addition to the training, Co A fabricated corduroy matting and maintained roads in their assigned sector. Co B continued its program for the training of the Inf in the use of the assault boat; and fabricated corduroy matting. Maintenance of roads in its assigned sector was carried on by Co C. All companies maintained equipment and vehicles.

25 March: All companies continued their programs for the care and maintenance of vehicles and equipment. In addition to this, all companies conducted training on basic engineer subjects in preparation for the training tests to be given 26 March. Befitting the battalion's policy for the rest and rehabilitation of personnel, all recreational facilities available were afforded the men.

26 March: The battalion maintained its present plan for the rehabilitation of personnel and equipment. Training in the use of the assault boat and 10 man rubber rcn boat was given to the 406 Inf and 407 Inf by companies B and C respectively, and plans were made and coordinated with the 405 Inf to instruct them in the use of these boats. Final plans and preparations were completed for the execution of a battalion retreat parade to be held 27 March and training tests on basic engineer subjects were given to all reinforcements who have joined this battalion since 1 Feb 45. In addition to this, companies A and C were each instructed in the use of treadway equipment in crossing small streams and ditches.

Hq 327th Engr Combat Bn
After Action Report
S-3 Standpoint

27 March: In addition to other activities, all companies conducted a program for the care and maintenance of equipment. Co A conducted training for reinforcements; and furnished 2 trucks to haul water softening material for AMG. Co C conducted assault boat training for the Inf and during the night furnished boat crews for Inf patrols to cross the Rhine River. The patrol however, was called off due to heavy enemy resistance on the far shore. A Battalion retreat parade was held at the Sports Plaza on the outskirts of Krefeld.

28 March: All companies continued their program for the care and maintenance of equipment and vehicles in preparation for the Ord inspection of vehicles on 29 March. Assault boat training was given to the Inf by Cos A and C, and training in delinquent basic engineer subjects was conducted by individual companies for their own personnel. Each line Co furnished two dump trucks apiece to haul water softening material for the AMG. Cos A and B conducted organized athletics in the form of a baseball game.

29 March: An Ord inspection of battalion vehicles was held in conjunction with the battalion's program for the care and maintenance of vehicles and equipment. Co A accomplished training with the 10-man rubber assault boats and also posted underpass clearance signs. Road maintenance in its assigned sector was carried out by Co B, and Co C received additional training in the use of treadway equipment from an instruction team from Battalion Hq.

30 March: All Cos continued their program for care and maintenance of equipment and rehabilitation of personnel. A practice loading of all battalion equipment and personal effects was conducted in preparation for future moves. Training in basic Engineer subjects was accomplished by all companies; and Co A relieved the 84th Div of guarding AMG installations in Krefeld. A party sponsored by this battalion for its officers and those from the 251 and 279 Engrs was held in the 102d Inf Div Off Club, "Villa Gorrilla".

31 March: The battalion continued its program for the care and maintenance of vehicles and equipment and in conjunction with the plan for the rehabilitation of personnel, organized athletics were conducted. All members of the battalion who had not previously seen the orientation film entitled "Germany" attended the make-up showing. Training in basic Engineer subjects was accomplished and arrangements were made for the combat team attachments from this battalion to move out with their respective combat teams. Co A continued to be responsible for the AMG guard in Krefeld.