

REPORT OF OPERATIONS

Period 8-29 May 1945

Battalion Headquarters, Hq & Sv Co. and Co. "C" were located in Gardelegen (RY 4843); Co. "A" located in Jeggau (RY 3543); and Co. "B" located in Letzlingen (RY 5534). RCT attachments were in effect with one platoon from each line company attached to its respective regiment. The battalion was under operational control of Division Artillery and was responsible for military government in a sector of the Gardelegen Landkreis. Road blocks were established to restrict civilian and displaced person's travel. Motorized roving patrols were operated throughout the area to maintain law and order. A detailed search was made of the entire battalion area in an effort to locate any hidden caches of ammunition, arms or explosives.

Operation of the 102d Division Railroad was coordinated with the 279th Engr C Bn and proved an important factor in the movement of PW's, DP's and supplies, principally coal, about 1000 ton per week. Twelve trucks were kept alerted at battalion for the 102d Division Provisional Truck Company to haul DP's and continued this work until the battalion left the Gardelegen Area. Due to the vast extent of the division area it was deemed advisable to attach a water supply unit to each regiment for an indefinite period. Reading of the river gauge in the Elbe River at Tangermünde (RY 8746) was undertaken on XIII Corps orders. On 9 May, Co. "B" was released from operational control of 405th Inf Regt and relieved Co. "A" of guarding the hospitals and medical supply dump in Letzlingen. Co. "C" placed a guard on railroad cars containing captured engineer equipment, in the Gardelegen railroad yard. Companies "A" and "B" each constructed a landing strip in the vicinity of their CP's to be used by Division Artillery's Liaison planes. RCT attachments terminated and the platoons from "A" and "C" Companies returned to their companies. RCT platoon from Company "B" remained in 406th Inf area to construct a PW enclosure at Sachau (RY 3936). All DP's were evacuated from the Battalion Area to camp in Gardelegen. The Battalion was relieved of all Military Government responsibility by the 380th F. A. Bn on 12 May at which time Companies "A" and "B" moved to Gardelegen.

Division Headquarters requested the Battalion to provide a provisional company to act as "The Guard of Honor" at a reception for the Russians. The Guard consisted of 158 enlisted men and three officers picked from the entire Battalion. One platoon, Company "A", constructed a landing dock on the Elbe River at Tangermünde to be used by the Russian delegation. A similar project was started by Company "C" at Rogatz (RY 7520) but was discontinued when it was decided to cross the entire group at Tangermünde. On 16 May the Russian delegation was ferried across the Elbe River and returned early on the morning of the 17th.

On 18 May, one platoon Co. "C", relieved the 309th Engrs of the operation of a ferry at Wahrenberg (RY 6090). An extensive reconnaissance was made by all companies to locate engineer road work in the division sector. One platoon, Co. "A", initiated rehabilitation of a small arms range in the vicinity of Gardelegen. Company "C" constructed a footbridge across the Elbe River at Wittenberge to expedite the flow of DP's. A Battalion shower unit was installed in Gardelegen. A German river patrol boat was refitted and put in operation to transport a Russian concert band across the Elbe River. On 24 May a Battalion parade was held at the Gardelegen airport and several awards were presented to officers and enlisted men of the Battalion.

A provisional training platoon was organized to train reinforcements, received from other arms and services, in engineer subjects. Suitable training sites for demolition work, bridge building and minelaying were located and were prepared for use. Due to the pending move of the division the platoon was disbanded with reorganization to take place in the new area.

A survey of all air raid shelters in the Division area, was made to determine location and type of construction. Recommendations were made for their destruction and bull-dozers and demolition teams were dispatched to destroy shelters that proved too much of a problem for civilian labor.

The coordinated operation of the 102d Division R.R., with the 279th Engr C Bn, was discontinued on 26th May. The landing dock at Tangermünde was removed and the operation of the DP ferry at Wahrenberg was discontinued. The provisional truck platoon was returned to battalion control and disbanded. The operation and guarding of the captured engineer equipment dump was discontinued and all material stored in dump was reported to XIII Corps. British troops relieved Company "A" of the reading of the Elbe River gauge.

The battalion moved from Gardelegen to Neudietendorf (WJ2362) and made preparations for relief of the 314th Engr C Bn. Bn Hq and Hq & Sv Co. closed in Neudietendorf and Companies "A", "B" and "C" closed in Bischleben (WJ2864), Ingersleben (WJ2463) and Wandersleben (WJ1960) respectively on 291700B May 1945.

Period: 30 May - 2 July 1945

The battalion relieved the 314th Engr C Bn of all military government responsibilities in that part of the Gotha Landkreis occupied by the battalion. The 407th Inf Regt was responsible for the entire Landkreis Gotha so the battalion was under their operational control. On 1 June Co. "B" moved from Ingersleben to Neudietendorf. Seven road blocks were established along the kreis boundary and roving security patrols were operated throughout the area. An average of five German soldiers were apprehended each day for improper discharge papers or no papers at all. A provisional truck platoon, consisting of twelve trucks was formed to haul displaced persons. Company "B" maintained a guard on captured records and business machinery located in Neudietendorf until evacuated by SHAEF. A search of the battalion area was conducted to locate any hidden caches of ammunition. A 24 hour guard was maintained on ammunition stacks in the vicinity of Neudietendorf. Co. "A" supervised construction of a DP camp in Ohrdruf (WJ 1153).

An extensive reconnaissance was made throughout the division area in search of lumber and bridging material for use by the battalion in its training program. A mock fortified area was discovered in the vicinity of Ohrdruf and plans were formulated to use it as a site for demolition training. The provisional training platoon was reformed and started training in basic engineer subjects. An athletic program was started in conjunction with the training schedule. Softball fields, volleyball courts and a swimming pool were constructed or rebuilt to aid in the program. Tours to points of interest were conducted as a part of the I&E program. Two battalion parades were held on the battalion parade grounds in Neudietendorf.

The Land Odograph was employed to map all primary and selected secondary roads shown on map sheets assigned by VIII Corps. This project was continuous throughout the stay in Neudietendorf.

On 2 July the battalion moved from Neudietendorf to a bivouac area two miles northeast of Bayreuth (W07759). Immediately upon arrival trucks returned to Gotha to move Div Hqs.

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Period 2-8 July 1945

During the stay in the bivouac area northeast of Bayreuth an athletic program was stressed and plans were made for moving to Plattling (WU7732). Trucks were dispatched to move the infantry to the new area. One platoon, Co. "B", maintained the approach road to Division Headquarters located in Stammbach (W08279).

Period 8 July - 11 Sept 1945

Bn closed in Plattling (WU7732) and assumed responsibility for security and control in that part of Landkreis Deggendorf south of the Danube River. Nine road blocks were set up and roving motorized patrols were operated throughout the area with an average of eight arrests each day being turned over to Military Gov't in Deggendorf (WU8333) and the PWE at Schalding (XQ1415). Company "C" moved from Plattling to the Internment Camp at Nattenberg (WU7937) relieving elements of the 329th Inf Regt of the operation and security of the camp.

The 309th Engr C Bn was relieved of all engineer responsibility in the division sector. Company "B" moved to Passau (XQ2112) and was made responsible for Landkreis' Passau, Grafenau, Wolfstein, Wegscheid and Greisbach. Co. "A" remained in Plattling and controlled Landkreis Regen and Deggendorf. Co. "C" remained at Nattenberg and controlled Landkreis' Vilshofen, Pfarrkirchen and Eggenfelden.

Supervision of road work was coordinated with the civilian road supervisor in each Landkreis with approximately 1000 PWs and civilians being employed throughout the division area. A pressed wood plant in Grafenau and several sawmills in the Passau area were put into operation to produce lumber for XII Corps. Co. "B" supervised the construction of PW and DP camps in the vicinity of Passau.

In conjunction with the winterization program Co. "C" cut and hauled firewood; Co. "B" supervised the construction of snow fence; a survey was made to locate snowplough equipment and civilian engineers were assisted in the removal of the bridge wreckage from the Isar River at Plattling and the building of a pile bridge. The battalion received an order for 2000 unit designation signs. With the arrival of V-J Day all tactical training ceased and an intensified program of I&E and athletics was adopted.

In conjunction with CIC personnel, the battalion was responsible for its sector in the operation "Easter" and the town of Plattling was thoroughly searched. An enclosure was operated and approximately 400 suspects were processed. The 407th Inf Regt relieved the battalion of all security and control missions and Company "C" moved from Nattenberg to Plattling.

Plans were formulated for moving the battalion from Plattling to Bayreuth (W07556). The 309th Engr C Bn relieved us of all engineer work in the division sector. The battalion moved to Bayreuth in three groups with 1/3 moving on 4th Sept, 1/3 on the 7th Sept and 1/3 on the 11th Sept.

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Period 11-30 Sept 1945

Bn Hqs and Hq & Sv Co. closed in Bayreuth (W07556); Co. "A" in Ziegelhütten (W06475); Co. "B" in Brand (WPl566); Co. "C" in Wohlback (W03396). Relief of the 9th Armored Engineer Bn was completed on 11 Sept and the battalion assumed the responsibility for engineer work in the division area. Co. "A" was assigned Landkreis' Kulmbach, Bayreuth, Munchberg and Stadt Steinach; Co. "B" was assigned Landkreis' Wundsiedel, Rehau, Hof and Naila; Co. "C" was assigned Landkreis' Coburg, Staffelstein, Kronach and Lichtenfels. A survey was initiated of all DP and PW camps in the division area, to estimate the winterization requirements. Requisitions were forwarded for the necessary materials and work was started on the camps. Co. "A" supervised road work on the Bayreuth-Kulmbach road and reconnaissance was made of the priority roads to estimate material and labor requirements necessary to maintain the roads. Several motor pools were built for the separate companies of the division in the Bayreuth area.

When Landkreis' Pegnitz and Ebermannstadt were added to the division area Company "A" assumed engineer responsibility in both kreis' and Co. "B" relieved Co. "A" of Landkreis' Munchberg and Stadt Steinach.

The efficiency of the battalion was impaired by the loss of 362 enlisted men through redeployment with only 77 replacements received. Several trucks were deadlined due to redeployment of the drivers and the lack of qualified replacements.