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NARA Date

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Auth: CG 35th Inf Div

HEADQUARTERS 60TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO 35

US ARMY

Initials *RLL*Date *18 Mar 1945*
4 March 1945

SUBJECT: Report After Action Against Enemy.

TO : The Adjutant General,
Washington 25, D.C.

1. In compliance with the provisions of Par 10 C3, AR 345-105, submitted below is report after action against the enemy for the 60th Engineer Combat Battalion, covering the period 1-28 February 1945.

1 February 1945

At the beginning of this period the battalion (-) was assembled in bivouac at St Geertruid, Holland. Having been tentatively assigned a defensive mission by the XVI US Army Corps, plans were made for organization and coordination of engineer defense works on the proposed front of the 35th Infantry Division. The 134th CT which had just been released from attachment to the 6th Armored Division, closed in the division assembly area, and the CT platoon from Co A was relieved of attachment to the CT at 1700 hours. The one platoon from Co A which had remained in southern France to supervise the loading and blocking of 35th Division artillery pieces on freight cars, closed into bivouac at 1800 hours. Extensive maintenance was performed on all organic equipment.

2 February 1945

The 35th Infantry Division received orders to relieve the 52d British Infantry Division on the night of 4-5 and 5-6 February 1945, with the 137th Infantry Regiment in the division left sector and the 320th Infantry Regiment in the division right sector. Co B was placed in direct support of the 137th Infantry Regiment and Co C in direct support of the 320th Infantry Regiment. Both company commanders made extensive reconnaissance of the roads and ground in the proposed zones of defense, and liaison was established with the British Engineers to learn the extent of the defense works which were already emplaced in this sector.

3 February 1945

The 1146th Engineer Combat Group was placed in direct support of the battalion. Upon receipt of information from the British troops who were defending this area, as to the number and density of defensive works, further detailed plans were begun for the supplement of these works with our own. It was found that because of this area having been a defensive "front line" for an extended period of time, it was literally covered with minefields, friendly and enemy, of all types. Maps overprinted with all known minefields were made available to division and supporting troops and all were cautioned to use roads only, in travelling, and to call for any area which was to be occupied to first be swept for mines.

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William D Tap 1st Lt *Tap*
DOWNGRADING COMMITTEE 25 FEB 46

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4 February 1945

At 0700 hours, Co C left St Geertruid, Holland, by motor convoy with the 320th Infantry Regiment, closing into bivouac at Birgden at 0900 hours. Hq & Serv Co and Co A left St Geertruid, Holland, at 1450 hours and convoyed north and east for 38 miles, closing into bivouac at Langbroich, Germany, at 1700 hours.

5 February 1945

Co A moved by motor convoy 39 miles, closing in bivouac at Bocket, Germany at 1430 hours. It was anticipated that shortly, the division would receive orders to assault the Roer River line in accordance with "Operation Grenade". This was to be a coordinated attack by the entire 9th Army. Plans were immediately formulated for the attack which would be in two phases, first the gapping and attacking through enemy and friendly defense works, and secondly the assault of the Roer River line. It was anticipated that three engineer combat battalions would be in direct support of this battalion for the assault of the river line. Due to the sudden unseasonal thaw, road maintenance became a major problem and from this time until the attack was launched, all companies were constantly occupied with road drainage, hauling of rubble and other road material, and generally engaged in keeping the division road net open.

6 February 1945

Co A cleared of mines, roads in the vicinity of Tripsrath, while Co C cleared fields in the vicinity of Waldenrath so that artillery pieces of the 161st and 127th Field Artillery Battalions could be safely "dug-in". All companies continued extensive road maintenance and hauling and spreading of rubble.

7 February 1945

As the 134th Infantry Regiment moved into "the line", Co A was placed in direct support at 0001 hours and moved by motor convoy to Randerath, closing into bivouac at 1300 hours. Final plans for the attack, including the assault of the river line, were formulated and all minute details discussed. The attack was scheduled for 10 February 1945. Major Sutton, Battalion Executive Officer, was given the task of coordinating all engineer activities in the sector of the 320th Infantry Regiment. Joint CP's were opened to coordinate between the organic companies and the supporting battalions, and a joint Division Engineer and Group CP was opened by Lt Col Botchin at Division Headquarters.

8 February 1945

Co B cleared roads of mines in the 137th Infantry Regimental sector and destroyed over 300 enemy AT mines. Co C removed enemy placed demolition charges from the 127th Field Artillery Battalion CP in Birgden and all companies continued extensive road maintenance and hauling of rubble in the division sector.

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9 February 1945

The battalion CP opened at Gangelt at 0930 hours. Co B was relieved of direct support of the 137th Infantry Regiment. The 1146th Engineer Combat Group was relieved of direct support of the battalion and the 1153d Engineer Combat Group placed in direct support. The battalion explosive dump and Bridge train assembled at Geilenkirchen. This equipage, ie., Bailey Bridges, heavy ponton equipment and steel treadway equipage, plus M2 assault boats was assembled at this centrally located point so that it could be transported to any crucial point on the Roer River in a minimum of time. All companies performed extensive road maintenance in the division sector and Co C removed and destroyed, with demolitions, numerous enemy AT and AP mines. D-Day for the attack was postponed pending the probable demolition of dams on the Roer River in the south, which would cause the Roer River to reach flood stages in our sector, and hinder the attack. The joint engineer CP's were dissolved and normal direct support on the part of the 1153d Engineer Combat Group was resumed.

10 February 1945

All companies performed extensive road maintenance and spreading of rubble in division sector. Co B (-) moved from Bocket to Gilrath, closing into bivouac at 1115.

11 February 1945

To the south, in the 1st US Army sector, our troops attacked toward the enemy held dams near the junction of the Roer and its chief tributary, the Urft River. The retreating enemy opened the dam outlets of the two largest dams, thereby loosing 160 million cubic feet of water down the Roer River valley. The river rose several feet over night, spreading into and inundating the surrounding countryside. The bridge train which was assembled at Geilenkirchen moved to a rear assembly area where the vehicles and equipage would be less vulnerable to enemy air attacks.

12 February 1945

As "Operation Grenade" had been temporarily postponed, the battalion CP was opened near the engineer dump in Geilenkirchen. All companies continued extensive road maintenance in the division sector.

13 February 1945

Because of the unusual amount of rain in this area, the sub-grade of important roads deteriorated rapidly. All companies continued extensive road maintenance. Co C cleared an area of mines in the vicinity of Utterath so that the 127th Field Artillery Battalion could "dig-in" their field pieces.

14 February 1945

Co A modified an M1 treadway bridge in the vicinity of Hilfarth to allow it to pass one-quarter ton vehicles. Companies A and C conducted schools on enemy AT and AP mines. Maintenance of roads in the division sector continued.

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15 February 1945

In preparation for the anticipated assault of the Siegfried Line, Co A conducted assault schools for selected infantry personnel of the 134th Infantry Regiment. The personnel of Co B attended a school on enemy mines & booby traps conducted by XVI Corps T.I.T. Co C constructed a Cl 40 treadway bridge over the Wurm River north of Dremmen and immediately prepared the bridge with demolitions so that it could be destroyed in the event of an enemy mechanized attack. The bridge over the Wurm River, north east of Oberbruch was also prepared with demolitions by Co C.

16 February 1945

Co A continued the assault school as well as a mine and booby-trap school for the personnel of the 134th Infantry Regiment. Road maintenance continued.

17 February 1945

Extensive road maintenance by all companies continued. Infantry and engineer assault teams were organized and preparations were made for a systematic destruction of enemy pillboxes of the Siegfried Line.

18-19-February 1945

Assault training of Infantry and Engineer personnel continued. Co C cleared roads of mines in the 320th Infantry Regimental sector and trained in the destruction of dragons' teeth obstacles.

20-21-22 February 1945

Assault training and training in the destruction of dragons' teeth continued for infantry and engineer personnel. Extensive road maintenance by all companies continued. In preparation for the assault of the Roer River, supporting engineers conducted assault boat training for 35th Infantry Division personnel on the Maas River. D-Day for "Operation Grenade" was set for 23 February 1945 and the joint CP's of Lt Col Bötchin, Maj Johnson, and Maj Sutton (with supporting engr's) were reformed.

23 February 1945

In preparation for "Operation Grenade", Co A was attached to the 134th Infantry Regiment and Co C was attached to the 320th Infantry Regiment at 0330 hours. Two platoons from Co B were placed in direct support of the 320th Infantry Regiment and one platoon placed in direct support of the 134th Infantry Regiment.

The division jumped off at 0330 hours and companies A and C, supported by the 202d and 280th Engineer Combat Battalions, respectively, facilitated the advance of the 134th and 320th Infantry Regiments to the river line. Co C moved by motor convoy, north and east, closing into bivouac at Dremmen at 1700 hours. All companies cleared roads of mines in their respective sectors. Supporting engineers opened a class 40 treadway bridge over the Wurm River in Oberbruch and removed abatis and rubble from the road in Oberbruch.

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NADA: Ddr

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24 February 1945

Co A replaced a treadway bridge by filling a crater south west of Hilfarth. Co B replaced a treadway bridge with a culvert over the Wurm River north of Dremmen. All companies cleared roads of mines in their respective areas. Supporting engineers constructed a 70 foot, Class 40 Bailey Bridge over an AT ditch on the main road north west of Hilfarth.

25 February 1945

Co B constructed a Class 40 treadway bridge over the Wurm River in Porselen. Companies A and C cleared mined areas in their respective sectors and performed necessary road maintenance. Since the divisions to our south had successfully assaulted and driven the enemy from the banks of the Roer River, "Operation Grenade" was revised and plans were made to send the 137th Infantry Regiment across the river through an area which had been assaulted so that the regiment could attack to the north along the east bank of the Roer. This maneuver would facilitate the crossing of the 134th Infantry Regiment. Co B was relieved of support of the 134th and 320th Infantry Regiments and attached to the 137th Infantry Regiment at 1159 hours. In the afternoon, Co B with the 137th Infantry Regiment, crossed the river to our south and closed into bivouac at Doveren. Co C was relieved of attachment to the 320th Infantry Regiment and placed in general support of the 35th Infantry Division at 1159 hours. Maj Sutton was moved to the 137th Infantry Regiment to coordinate engineer work on the other side of the river.

26 February 1945

Co A cleared numerous roads of mines in the 134th Infantry Regimental sector and removed two road blocks. The 134th Infantry Regiment was scheduled to assault the river line at 0600 hours and preliminary engineer operations (with assault boats, foot bridges, and treadway bridge material being brought forward) were carried out accordingly by the 202d Engineer Combat Battalion, coordinated by Major Johnson. However, it was found not necessary to use the assault boats, and an assault foot bridge was constructed by the 202d Engineer Combat Battalion to cross the infantry. While the main bridge in Hilfarth was under artillery fire by friendly and enemy troops, two enlisted men from Co A cut the demolition wires and the bridge was captured intact.

On the far side, the 137th Infantry Regiment attacked to the north from the vicinity of Doveren at 0600. Co B, in addition to its normal mission of supporting the advance of the 137th Infantry Regiment was reinforced with a detachment from the 258th Engineer Combat Battalion with treadway bridging equipment and was assigned the mission of opening the division MSR from the other side, toward the Hilfarth bridge. At 1500 hours, a reconnaissance party and mine sweepers covered by the I & R platoon of the 137th Infantry Regiment, made contact with the 134th Infantry Regiment in Huckelhoven. The minor bridges on the MSR were found intact, but a fifty foot crater was found in the road. Co B and the detachment of supporting troops constructed a bypass around the crater and cleared the roads of mines south to Hilfarth, opening the MSR into Huckelhoven.

Supporting engineers constructed a Class 40 Bailey Bridge over the Teich River south of Hilfarth, and completed another footbridge, an infantry support bridge, and a CL 40 floating treadway bridge at Hilfarth. Co C replaced a treadway bridge with a culvert and fill over the Wurm River south of Oberbruch and cleared roads of mines in its sector.

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27 February 1945

After successfully assaulting the Roer River, the 134th and 137th Infantry Regiments abreast attacked to the north along the river line. Co B cleared mines from roads to facilitate the advance of the 137th Infantry Regiment and filled an AT ditch in the road north of Doveren to pass tanks. Co A cleared roads of mines, filled a crater on the road north east of Millich and removed AT road blocks on the road south east of Huckelhoven. Co C improved a culvert across the Wurm River in Oberbruch and constructed a culvert on the Wurm River north of Porselen, thereby opening another road net to the Roer. The 35th Infantry Division bridgehead over the river was firmly established when supporting engineers completed another Class 40 floating treadway bridge over the river west of Hilfarth. Battalion Headquarters moved by motor convoy, north to Dremmen, closing into bivouac at 1200 hours.

28 February 1945

In the early morning hours, supporting engineers constructed a Class 40 Bailey Bridge across a canal and AT ditch in the vicinity of Kivit; a heavy ponton bridge was constructed over the Roer at Kivit and TD's immediately crossed to the hostile shore to pursue the retreating enemy. Co B constructed a Class 40 treadway bridge over a stream on the main road south of Arsbeck. Companies A and B were relieved of attachment to their respective regiments, and to facilitate the attack, were placed in direct support, clearing numerous road blocks and filling craters.

The Battle casualties for the month of February 1945 are as follows:

	OFF	EM
KIA.....	0	1
DOW.....	0	1
SWA.....	0	1
SIA.....	0	0
LWA.....	0	3
LIA.....	0	1
MIA.....	0	0
Total.....	0	7

During this period, three Bronze Stars were presented to enlisted men who returned to duty after hospitalization for wounds. Formal presentation was made 12 February 1945 at Gillrath, Germany, to Sgt Robert L Chesney, Co B, of the Bronze Star awarded by General Orders 40, Headquarters 35th Infantry Division, dated 5 October 1944, for heroic action in the capture of a bridge, intact, across the Moselle River during September 1944. At a formal presentation at Randerath, Germany, on 12 February 1945, the Bronze Star was awarded to Cpl William E O'Brien, Co A, by General Orders 41, Headquarters 35th Infantry Division, dated 7 October 1944, for heroic action during an assault crossing of the Meurthe River in September 1944. Formal presentation of the Bronze Star awarded by General Orders 4, Headquarters 35th Infantry Division, dated 12 January 1945, was made to Pvt James R Keegan, Co C, for heroism in action while evacuating a wounded comrade from a minefield during December 1944.

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Awards received by members of this battalion are as follows:

DSC		Silver Star		Soldiers Medal		Bronze Star		Air Medal	
Reg	Olc	Reg	Olc	Reg	Olc	Reg	Olc	Reg	Olc
Officers									
Enlisted									
Men									
						3			

The number of Purple Heart medals awarded is: 5

Philip Potchin
PHILIP POTCHIN
Lt Col CE
Commanding

Inclosures:

S-3 Journal 1-28 Feb 45

5 Photographs