

299th Engineer Combat Battalion

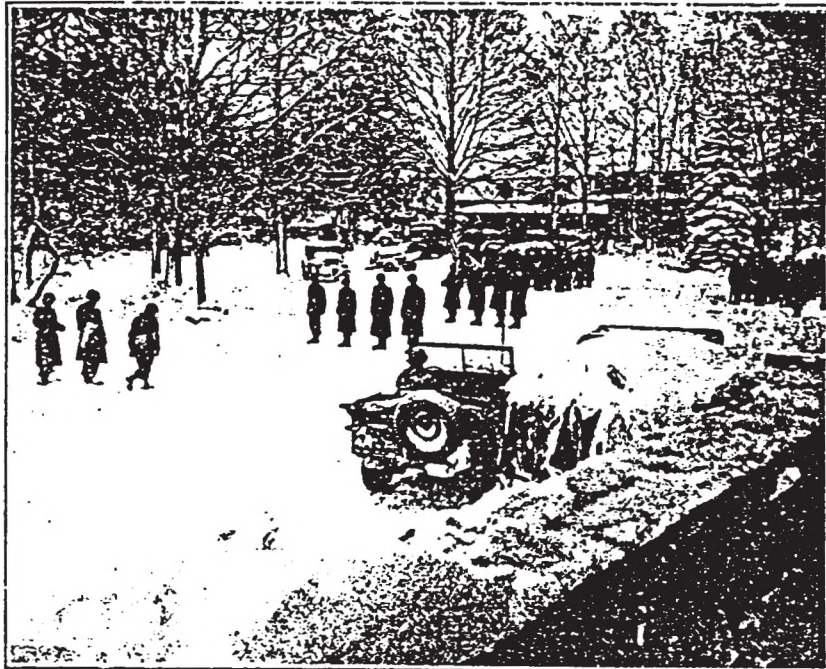
Battle History

Battle of the Bulge

16 December 1944

to

25 December 1944



AWARDING BRONZE STARS

SPA, BELGIUM

Retyped from copies of originals

by

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"B" Company

Revised June 1994

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HEADQUARTERS, 299th ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

AP0230
26 Dec/44

SUBJECT: Battle History-299th Engineer Combat Battalion from 16
December to 22 December 1944.

TO : Commanding General, First United States Army, APO 230,
Thru: Commanding Officer, 1128th Engineer Combat Group.

The 299th Engineer Combat Battalion was attached to the 1128th Engineer Combat Group who in turn was in support of VIII Corps. The 299th Engineer Combat Battalion had been completely committed in an extensive lumber cutting program which was a part of the First Army's Winterization program. The battalion was bringing their lumber quota to a close and had for several days been making defensive plans for protection of rear areas against enemy paratroopers.

The first enemy action concerning the battalion came on 16 December 1944 with the shelling of the town of Diekerch, Luxembourg, where the battalion was operating a sawmill. The sawmill was evacuated of all personnel and equipment.

At 0130 17 December 1944 the battalion was alerted, all observation posts were manned according to plan and Company "A" was placed on alert. All the battalion personnel and equipment forward of Corps rear boundary were assembled at their respective CPs, located at that time at Hachy and Habay, Belgium.

The enemy threat grew worse on the 18th and Company "B" was ordered out at 1825 to establish and man a barrier line running northwest from Martelange and generally along N46 to its junction with N15, a frontage of about twelve miles

Company "B" opened their CP at Witry, Belgium at 0055 on the 19th and started immediately to establish a barrier line, which they completed by noon that day.

Company "A" was ordered out at 1150 to establish a 15 mile barrier running northwest along N46 in extension of the one given to Company "B" to the junction of N26 and from there, along the Ourthe River to a point north of N4. This lined up with the barrier line being established by the 1278th Engineer Combat Battalion which extended on, northwest, to La Roche. Company "A" moved out, and established a CP at La Vacherie at 1415 and went to work immediately on their barrier line. First priority was given to a Bailey Bridge on N4 in the vicinity of Ortheville and other bridges in that vicinity. It had been reported that tanks were in the immediate vicinity.

At 1500 Company "C" was ordered to move To Vaux, and remain in support of Companies "A" and "B". They opened their CP at Vaux at 1725.

(1)

Company "A" completed the preparation for demolition of six bridges in their sector at 2029. The southern portion of their sector having been taken care of by elements of the 1278th Engineer Combat Battalion. A patrol sent out from Company "A" to prepare a bridge at P487646 for demolition met an enemy armored column of fourteen vehicles advancing on them. They engaged the enemy possibly knocking out one tank. The patrol abandoned two trucks and the men scattered into the woods when capture was imminent. The patrol leader returned to the Company CP alone at 0145. Enemy action early the 20th of December along the northwest end of Company "A" barrier caused them to blow all bridges except the Bailey Bridge on N4. Security of the Bailey Bridge was reinforced by eight tank destroyers.

Company "A" was to be relieved at daylight of all blocks north of N26 by elements of the 158th Engineer Combat Battalion and all blocks south of N26 and N15 by Company "C" 299th Engineer Combat Battalion who was still in reserve at VAux. Company "C" Moved to Morhet opening their CP at 1600. Due to enemy action, second platoon Company "A" was not relieved by elements of the 158th Engineer Combat Battalion.

The enemy attacked the Bailey Bridge at 1930 on 20th December. In the ensuing fight, the tank destroyers knocked out an enemy tank on the end of the bridge thus making it an effective obstacle. A counter-attack by the 158th Engineer Combat Battalion with elements of Company "A" 299th Engineer Combat Battalion attached, secured the bridge, destroyed an enemy armored vehicle and pushed the enemy back, opening N4 to Bastogne. The second platoon Company "C" 299th Engineer Combat Battalion arrived and relieved the second platoon of Company "A" on the Bailey Bridge about noon. Company "A" less two squads still missing in action assembled at the Battalion CP at Hachy and went into reserve.

On the evening of the 19th the battalion submitted plans to Group Headquarters for a barrier line from Martelange southeast to Arlon, and east of N4 a frontage of about fifteen miles. The task of preparing and manning the barrier was given to elements of the 341st Engineer General Service Regiment, at Arlon, on the 20th, who had come under control of the 1128th Engineer Combat Group. The 299th Engineer Combat Battalion was to supervise the barrier and coordinate it with their barrier to the north. The executive Officer was sent out at noon to check the barrier. He returned about 1800 with information that the barrier was weak due to possible bypasses of bridges and fording of streams. He also reported that a pitched battle was going on just north of Martelange at about 1500 hours. This was confirmed by reports from Company "B" that they blew the two bridges in Martelange at 1720 and that enemy tanks and infantry had moved into the town under the protection of heavy gun fire.

All barriers in the vicinity of Martelange were soon blown and all personnel not cut off by the enemy returned to the Company CP at Witry. Company "B" was given orders to stand by at Witry as long as possible.

At 1745 on the afternoon of the 20th, the 299th Engineer Combat Battalion received orders to retake Martelange. Company "C" 1278th Engineer Combat Battalion, less one platoon and 140 riflemen of the 341st Engineer General service Regiment were attached to the battalion for the mission. Two forces were organized. Captain Manion, 299th Engineer Combat Battalion was to meet Captain Sullivan (C.O. Co "C" 1278th Engineer Combat Bn.) in Habay and take element of his company to Witry where he was to pick up remnants of the first platoon of Company "B" 299th Engineer Combat Battalion who had been on the bridges in Martelange and to attack the town from the west. This force was to be known as Company "B's" force. Lt. Jenkins 299th Engineer Combat Battalion was ordered to proceed to RJ Rt9 and N4 where he was to meet Captain Oldenberg with 140 riflemen. This force was to be known as "Buick" force and was to attack Martelange from the south with N4 as an axis for the attack.

At 2000 hours Major Kohler (battalion executive officer) was sent to CP at Witry to coordinate the two attacks. He arrived there at 2230 and found that Company "B" task force had not yet assembled.

Captain Manion arrived at Witry at 2330 hours with approximately one platoon of Company "C" 1278th Engineer Combat Battalion. The convoy had become separated in moving forward and it was expected that the rest of the company would follow.

Company "B" task force was immediately organized consisting of: a provisional platoon of Company "B" 299th Engineer Combat Battalion, with Captain Steen (company commander) in charge, and the two officers (Lt. Donahoo and Lt. Seibert) accompanying him. A provisional platoon of Company "C" 1278th Engineer Combat Battalion with Lt. Christie in charge accompanied by Lt. Zelanzy.

Captain Manion moved out in charge of the task force at 0112 hours with the mission of establishing a defensive position on the outskirts of town and sending patrols into town to obtain strength and disposition of the enemy. He was not to attack the town before dawn. No contact was made with "Buick".

"Buick" force had moved up N4 to the southern outskirts of town and were preparing to send night patrols into town. This they accomplished very successfully, obtaining information of strength a disposition of the enemy. They did not attack.

The remainder of Company "C" 1278th Engineer Combat Battalion arrived just as the task force Company "B" was moving out. They were joined by Captain Sullivan Company Commander, Company "C" 1278th Engineer Combat Battalion at 0210 hours and moved forward under his command at 0247 with strength of about a platoon less one squad. The squad led by Sgt. Bernsten having been sent out by Major Kohler to patrol the road blocks

to the northwest along N46 and to establish contact with Lt. Russell, second platoon, Company "B" who was in charge. The patrol returned about 0830 the next morning reporting that everything was quiet.

Contact was made with elements of the 552 Engineer Heavy Ponton Company who were along N45 in the vicinity of Trainmont. The 552 Engineer Heavy Ponton Company had a barrier line from Trainmont northwest to N15, and agreed to stand by their barriers as long as elements of the task force were forward of them. Close communication was maintained between task force headquarters at Witry and the 552 Heavy Ponton Company.

Lt. Zelanzy arrived at the CP at Witry with Lt. Christie who had been injured in a jeep accident. Lt. Christie was evacuated to Battalion CP at Hachy. Lt. Zelanzy reported that everything was quiet. Patrols had been sent into town and only one patrol had been fired upon. One man of the patrol being slightly injured when a bullet cut his cheek. The man had not been evacuated. A patrol had been sent out to contact "Buick".

Chow, medical supplies and a SCR 284 with operators from the 1278th Engineer Combat Battalion was sent forward with Lt. Zelanzy about 0730. Although contact was made with the radio on two occasions for short intervals, no messages were able to be transmitted or received, and all personnel sent forward at this time are still missing in action. It was later confirmed that these men never contacted the forward CP.

Company "C" was ordered out of their barrier line on the afternoon of the 20th by officers of the 28th Division who had occupied the area. The division did not want barriers constructed in front of them that would interfere with their advance. Company "C" less the second platoon assembled at the CP at Morhet and turned in for rest. About 0200 on the 21st Company "C" was ordered to reinforce the task force at Witry with all available men.

At 0830 Captain Bunting arrived at the CP at Witry with approximately one platoon of Company "C" 299th Engineer Combat Battalion to reinforce the task force. The Company convoy less one platoon had been cut by enemy action while moving from the CP at Morhet the night before. Lt. Koenig and one squad had been dispatched when the convoy reached Vaux, to pick up stragglers. The second platoon under Lt. Husch was attached to the 158th Engineer Combat Battalion and was guarding the Bailey Bridge on N4 at Ourtheville. They remained there until ordered to evacuate. The second platoon Company "C" supported by elements of the 158th Engineer Combat Battalion fought off several enemy threats, putting one enemy machine gun out of action. Lt. French had been sent back to contact them.

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Lt. Russell reported at the CP at Witry at 0930 with four enemy paratroopers that had been captured in the vicinity of a road block at Remoiville about 0800. Lt. Russell was given the mission of blowing all obstacles along N46 and concentrating his force at the road block at the junction of N46-N15 and to fight a delaying action. He left the CP about 0900.

Upon the approach of German infantry and tanks, he blew the craters at RJ N15-N46. His men stopped one tank with a bazooka and killed at least six of the German infantry with rifle fire. He then withdrew to Rosiere Le Petit where he was attached to the 28th Division defending the town. On 21st December his men participated in repulsing a German infantry and tank attack. They were again attacked by infantry and tanks at 1800 hours the same day. At 2030 hours the division issued orders to withdraw to Neufchateau.

The platoon reorganized less eight men, who were attached to the 110th Infantry, did engineer work with the division engineers for three days. At 1500 25 December all men were detached from the 28th Division and proceeded back to the Battalion CP at Malonne arriving there about 1930 hours.

The first sergeant Company "C" 1278th Engineer Combat Battalion reported in at 0930 21 December that there were enemy paratroopers at Fauvillers cutting the task force off at Martelange.

Captain Bunting and elements of Company "C" 299th Engineer Combat Battalion then present were sent forward to break through to the task force at Martelange and keep the road open. Company "C" engaged the enemy at Fauvillers at 1005 cleaned out the town, killing at least two and taking four prisoners. They continued their advance toward Martelange. About one half mile outside Fauvillers the enemy pinned them down with heavy machine gun and mortar fire. The advance point had been cut off. When the enemy started closing in the flank the company withdrew to the RJ of N45-N46 where they reinforced the road block with half a squad, the rest returned to the CP at Witry.

Orders had already reached the CP at Witry to evacuate and return to Battalion CP at Hachy. A message was sent to Battalion CP that the task force had been cut off in Martelange and that armored vehicles were needed to break through and get them out. In the meantime, an officer from the 552 Engineer Heavy Ponton Company had come forward to the CP to check on the situation and stated that all was secure behind us and that he had gotten two tank destroyers to support his road blocks. Captain Bunting was sent back to try to get the two tank destroyers to support his company, which now amounted to two full platoons (the stragglers having arrived), in the attack on Martelange, in an effort to break through and get the task force. The tank destroyers refused to assist without orders from their headquarters.

Major Kohler ordered everyone to withdraw and return to their respective CPs. The convoy was assembled and a patrol was sent back to pick up the rear guard. In addition to the rear guard they picked up the first sergeant of Company "C" 299th Engineer Combat Battalion and two men who had been cut off just east of Fauvillers along with two men from the forward truck area who had escaped an enemy attack. The two men who escaped from the forward truck area reported that they had been surrounded that morning about daylight and all the vehicles had been captured before they could destroy them.

The remnants of the task force left Witry at 1420. At 1100 hours on 21 December the Battalion Headquarters received word to assemble all personnel and proceed to St. Cecil.

Company "A" moved out and relieved "Buick" forces at 0600 on 21st. They took up defensive positions at a road block just south of Martelange on N4 and remained there until word was received to disengage and return to Bn. CP. Company "A" reblew the crater on N4 to increase its effectiveness. They returned to Battalion CP at 1500 hours. Executive officer arrived at the battalion CP with remnants of Company "B" and Company "C" about 1500. Three squads of Company "B" had returned from obstacles in the vicinity of RJ N15-N46. Lt. Russell and 19 enlisted men were still fighting on N15 in the vicinity of their road blocks.

at 1630 the Battalion convoy moved out from Hachy arriving at St. Cecil at 2030 hours where the battalion was billeted in two hotels. Major Perry remained at Hachy to pick up stragglers and later went to Neufchateau to get Lt. Russell and men released.

The battalion departed from St. Cecil at 1030 on the morning of the 22nd and arrived at destination at Malonne, Belgium at 1660.

Lt. French arrived at Battalion CP at Malonne at 1830 24 December after having been picked up by elements of the Fourth Armored Division entering Fauvillers on the 22nd of December.

Major Perry arrived at Battalion CP at Malonne about 1930 25 December with Lt. Russell and nineteen enlisted men.

Captain Steen arrived at CP at Malonne about 2000 25 December with Lt. Donahoo and Lt. Seibert. The survivors of Captain Steen's task force had been taken prisoner at Martelange on the 21st of December and evacuated to Bigonville. They were liberated when elements of the Fourth Armored Division retook Bigonville on the 24th of December. Captain Steen reported that First Sergeant Bowers, Compny "B" and approximately 25 men were on their way back having been cleared thru the Fourth Armored Division.

A check on the 26th of December revealed that 41 men were still missing in action and two were wounded in action.

MILTON A. JEWETT
Lt. Col. Corps of Engineers
Commanding

HEADQUARTERS, 299th ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION,

APO 230
27 Dec 44

Interview of S/Sgt Stanley E. Green, first platoon,
Company "B" 299th Engineer Combat Bn.

S/Sgt Green was the only man to escape from enemy hands at Martelange until the other survivors of Captain Steen's force were liberated by elements of the Fourth Armored Division on the 25th of December 1944.

We moved out at 0745 the morning of the 21st of December along the same route that Cpl. Kelly had taken his patrol several hours before. We advanced to the first house on the southwest edge of town. From there we cut off to the right and followed a hedge to the creek. We crossed the creek on a small wagon bridge. After crossing the creek we turned east in the direction of the town. We were moving in single file with one fifty caliber machine gun at the head of the column with Captain Steen. We advanced to a position just beyond the sawmill and a little to the left. No shot had been fired up to that time.

When the advance elements reached the bridge site on N45-46 the enemy opened up with machine gun and mortar fire on the sawmill area. At the same time heavy fire opened up in the direction of the 1278th Engineer element.

We were pinned down for some time until pvts. Eichberg and Fagan moved their 50 caliber machine gun some fifty yards thru the fire, set it up and partially neutralized the enemy fire. Tanks were then brought up and engaged us with point blank fire.

Lt. Donahoo told us to try to withdraw and work our way around to the right to get a machine gun firing into our flank. T/5 Wiltsie with pvts. Cobb and D'Agostino started to crawl to the right over an open field toward the machine gun. They were immediately brought under concentrated enemy machine gun fire and T/5 Wiltsie made his way back to the lumber pile. The other two men were given up for dead.

About 1100 Lt. Donahoo gave orders for everyone to get out as best they could. About ten minutes later I started crawling along the ground to the creek, swimming down the creek with a log against my head for protection against the small arms fire that was coming at me. I stayed in the stream until I came to a hedgerow. I crawled out of the stream and along the hedgerow until I reached a house on the edge of town. From there I followed the road back to where the CP had been and finding it gone continued on toward the truck park, thinking that I could take a vehicle and go back to Witry for help. About this time two men came after me from Captain Manion's CP now located on the high ground overlooking the road.

HEADQUARTERS, 299th ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

APO 230
27 Dec 44

Sgt. Leon A. Tobin, weapons sergeant, third platoon, Company "B" 299th Engineer Combat Battalion was in charge of a bridge on N-46 at Menufontaine.

No activity in this vicinity. Lt. Russell gave orders to blow the bridge at about 1200 21 December 1944. We Blew the bridge and split the force. Half of them went with Lt. Russell and the other half with myself were put on the bridge at cobreville in addition to Sgt. Cipperman and his crew.

About 1500 21 December the infantry was closing in on us so we blew that bridge and left by way of N-15 to Neufchateau. At Neufchateau we met another Company truck which told us that they needed help at Company "B" CP at Witry. We went to Witry arriving there about 1600 and finding no one there, returned to the Battalion CP at Hachy.

HEADQUARTERS, 299th ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

APO 230
27 Dec 44

Interview of Pfc Glenn J. Rolling, first squad, first platoon, Company "B", 299th Engineer Combat Battalion.

We were three days at the bridge at Martelange on N-4. About 1530 on the fourth day things got hot. We did not know which way we could expect the enemy from and kept changing our gun from side to side on what news we could from civilians.

The enemy finally did advance from the direction of Bastogne pushing many civilians ahead of them. When we first saw them they were only infantry with no tanks or heavy weapons. They had been shooting up rockets. The shelling came spasmodically into the town and the hills and we could not tell if it was friendly or enemy fire. They were firing while advancing on us. We waited until they were close before blowing the bridge. We had mounted our 50 caliber on the truck and all men were loaded except Sgt. Cook. Sgt. Cook lit the five second fuse and jumped on the side of the truck and we pulled down to the lower bridge on N45-N46 where Sgt. Caufield was in charge of his squad. We arrived there at the same time as Lt. Donahoo and S/Sgt. Green. All men were loaded except Caufield who pulled the fuse and then we departed down N45-N46 to Company "B" CP at Witry.

I left Captain Manion's CP with patrol from the 1278th Engineers to try to get back for help. We made our way down through the woods where we saw two men moving in the edge of the woods. The Staff Sergeant in charge of the patrol in his excitement opened fire on one of them and hit him. We later found out that they were two 1278th men sent out as scouts. The man who was hit died shortly after. We continued on until we heard a jeep coming up thru the woods. We stopped it and there were some men from the 626th Engrs. in it. They gave us all a ride back to Habay where we reported to a Lt. Colonel. After getting something to eat, I went back into town. I heard a report that there were paratroopers in Arlon so I went into Arlon and joined the search. I slept all night in Arlon and returned to Hachy and reported to Major Perry the next morning.

HEADQUARTERS, 299th ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

APO 230
27 Dec 44

Pvt. Francis T. Malkowski, second platoon, Company "B" 299th Engineer Combat Battalion (Jeep driver Lt. Russell)

Corporal LaMantia and his part of a squad (second platoon) captured four Germans on the morning of 21st December and turned them over to Lt. Russell about 0800 and delivered them to Company "B" CP at Witry.

We returned north up N 46 to blow the obstacles as ordered and held at the junction of N 15 and N 46. We blew all the prepared obstacles on N 46 and dug in at the junction on N 15 and spent a quiet night in our foxholes. The next morning the enemy started advancing and we blew the block on N 15 and took up positions to fight. Lt. Russell said he thought the enemy was outflanking us and he wanted to go back a ways and check the flanks. I took him back a distance and he started walking off to the left flank. He told me to go back to the road block and tell S/Sgt. Starowicz to evacuate the men if he couldn't hold out any longer. I went forward to the road block and the men were already loaded so I brought them back on N 15 to where we met Lt. Russell. He took the men off the trucks and started back with them to the road block. He left me with my jeep and the two trucks with drivers and three other men to guard the vehicles with instructions to stay there.

Later, a Captain told me to evacuate all wounded so with the help of Pvt. Jennings (medic) we evacuated all wounded we could get to.

About 1200 I decided to go back to the Company "B" CP and report what was going on. When I arrived at Neaufchateau I was told that Witry was taken and I could not get thru.

I then went to Hachy and reported to Major Perry.

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HEADQUARTERS 299TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

APO 230
27 Dec/44

SUBJECT: Battalion Journal from 16 Dec 1944 to 22 Dec 1944

TO : Commanding Officer, 299th Engineer Combat Bn. APO 230

16 December 1944

Town of Diekerch shelled today by German heavy artillery. Shelling began 0530 hours lasted until 0800 hours- again at 1000 to noon- 1300 hours until 1500 hours. Schrapnel cut power line supplying our sawmill in town. One enemy shell landed in gate to sawmill. Germans using instantaneous fuse. No damage. German aircraft seen over town in afternoon. No personnel of this command injured.

17 DECEMBER 1944

All observation posts manned in accordance with security plan. Sawmill operation forward of Corps rear boundary discontinued. All battalion equipment forward of this boundary returned to battalion CP. Enemy reported in Diekerch. 158th Engineer Combat Battalion manning a barrier line east of Bastogne running north-south from Wiltz to Asselborn. Enemy has broken front line in vicinity of Clervaux and heading in direction of Bastogne. Paratroopers reported to have landed in vicinity of Wiltz. Enemy tanks in Wiltz.

18 DECEMBER 1944

Strong enemy attack vicinity Martelange-Bastogne, with use of tanks. VIII Corps and Army Headquarters moving out. 1825-Company "B" moving out to take up a barrier line running NW from Martelange and along N46 to N15.

19 DECEMBER 1944

CP Company "B" opened at Witry (P475422) at 190055 A Dec. 44
CP Company "A" opened at LaVacherie (P408638) at 191415 A Dec. 44. Both companies will occupy barrier line extending from Martelange NW to LaRoche in conjunction with 158th Engineers. 158th Engineers on left flank, 299th Engineers on right flank.

Situation report 1810 hours:

1. Tank action at P5268
2. Enemy tank action at P6365
3. Small arms fire reported at P5958
4. Shell fire on outskirts of Bastogne

1725- Company "C" to support "B" and "A" Companies in barrier line. Company "C" CP at Vaux.

1855-Rcn report enemy tank action vic. P5268

2025- Rcn report machine gun fire vic. P4659. Area SW N4 (Bastogne NW) is clear. Area northeast of road unsafe.

2029- Bridges at P430662, P420665, P433619, P487645, P452673, P433620, P415640 in "A" Company sector prepared for demolition.

2030- Report that German soldiers, dressed in American uniforms with dog tags and travelling American Jeeps has been received.

2105-Ourthe River at P519693 is fordable and has been forded by enemy tanks (number undetermined).

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2200- Bridge at P452673 blown by Company "A".

2225- 158th Engineers will contact Company "A" in the morning (20 Dec) To relieve them of road blocks from N26 north. Company "C" will relieve them of road blocks from N26 south to N15.

2225- Orders sent to Company "A" to return to battalion CP as soon as possible after being relieved of road blocks.

2330- Company "B" reports no enemy contacted.

20 December 1944

0145- Platoon Sergeant third platoon Company "A" reported that attempt to demolish bridge at P487646 was impossible because of enemy action. Lost two 2½ ton Dump trucks.

0155- Report received that six German tanks are in the vicinity of Martelange.

0215- Company "A" forced to blow bridge at P433619 on N26 when under heavy machine gun and rifle fire.

0215- Reports at 2400 from bridge at P430622. Machine gun and rifle fire forced outpost to withdraw.

0220- Security at bridge P430622 strengthened by 8 tank destroyers.

0235- Company "C" reported no enemy activity. German tanks in Hollange. N4 open from Bastogne to Martelange.

0300- Company "A" made contact with Company "B" 1278th Engineers. Situation quiet but company alerted to move out if necessary. Missing men have not reported in as yet.

0330- Report from Company "B" situation unchanged. No contact with enemy reported. Everything quiet. Radio in best possible position. Heavy teletype interference.

0800- Reported from Company "A"- bridge at P415640 blown.

1245- Message to Company "A"- Gather all available men that are not on road blocks and have them return to battalion CP. Two squads of your Company in Battalion area since last night.

1400- Road blocks placed at P494485 by second platoon bridge at P508451. Had a good fight last night. No one injured. Not necessary to blow bridge. Heavy machine guns fire west of Remichampagne. Enemy tanks reported 4-5 miles from Tintange moving in direction of Martelange.

1540- Enemy tanks in Martelange. Bridge on N4 will have to be blown ("B" Company).

1604- Message to "B" Company- have you any estimate on number and type of tanks in Martelange. Make all possible use of weapons before blowing bridge.

1615- String of mines to be placed across road at P49482.

1615- Bridge on N4 at Martelange blown. Effective obstacle

1707- Message to Company "B". CO orders. Do not move unless absolutely necessary. Verify presence of tanks on this side (south) of Martelange bridge.

1730- Message from Company "B". Number and type of tanks unknown. Heavy concentration of 88 fire for past three hours. Enemy foot troops in Martelange.

1745- CO received order s to recapture Martelange. Special troops attached:

1. 140 men armed with rifle and carbine from 341st Engrs.

2. Charlie Co. of 1278th Engrs. minus 1 platoon.

1750- CO orders Captain Manion to meet Captain Sullivan (Co Co. "C" 1278th Engineers) in Habay. To take force to Company "B" CP at Witry. Pick up what was left of platoon on Martelange Bridge. Then to have force attack town of Martelange from west.

18
19

CO also orders Lt. Jenkins to proceed to RJ Rt 9 and N4 to meet' Captain Oldenberg with his 140 men. This force is to attack Martelange from south with N4 as an axis for the attack. Code name assigned Buick. Mission of two forces- Capture Martelange.

1815- Unit now in Battalion area- 25 cal Rcn. sqdn from 4th Armored Division expected CP at Vance. They expect medium tanks within an hour.

1830- Message from Company "B"-Our forces going back to Martelange

1830- Message to Company "B")-You are to release to Manion only what is left of platoon in Martelange.

1854- Message to Company "B"- Manion force will attack Martelange from direction of your CP. Another force will attack from the south. Lt. Jenkins will be a member of this force.

1940- Company "B". Two more bridges blown on orders of artillery officer. He reports no friendly troops left in front of us. Ten armored cars positively identified.

2000- CO orders Major Kohler (Ex. O.) to proceed to Company "B" CP and coordinate two attacks on Martelange.

2045- Message to Company "B"- Refer your Msg #7 1940m hours. Request location of enemy forces. Do you still hold your positions.

2110- Company "B"- Enemy forces from Martelange north. Bridges at Bodange blown. We are still at the same CP.

2130- Company "C" - All quiet on my sector. Division has situation under control.

2130- Message to "B" Company. Hostile vehicles (unknown type) moving west out of Martelange. Germans reported using Sherman tanks with their markings. Germans using American uniforms and equipment.

2145- Friendly armored vehicles in Habay.

2150 "Buick" past RJ Rt 9 and N4 enroute to Martelange.

2200- Report from Company "A"- Bridge at P433620 blown checked by patrol.

2300- "B" Company- Where are the reinforcements that were coming?

2306- To "B" Co.- Reinforcements are enroute your Headquarters.

2315- Have you had any contact with "Buick" force?

2320- No contact with "Buick".

2325- This Hdqrts in contact with "Buick". Use us as relay.

2330- Report from Buick force. Company "B" blew road block this side (south) of Martelange. Am proceeding forward. Will keep you posted.

2345- Major Kohler arrived Company "B" CP

2350- To "B" Co. Report received that road block south of Martelange was blown. Is there enemy activity south of town?

21 DECEMBER 1944

0025- Road block south of martelange blown by "B" Company because of tank and tank destroyer south of the bridge.

0112- Task force moved out on mission. Need medical supplies, water, litters, ammo, rations, Ex. O.

0210- "Buick" has sent patrols into the town of Martelange.

0300- Patrols reported back from Martelange. Report one German Tiger tank and one American TD used by Germans. Got as far as bridge site. Lost two men.

0430- Tank battle in direction of Bastogne. Heavy small arms fire believed to be on N4. Ex. O.

0545- First Sgt. Mir. 1278 reported back from forward detrucking point at 0455. Everything quiet on this sector. Ex. O.

(9) 13

0545- Reported by (Lt. Zelanzy) patrol contacted enemy when trying to cross bridge attacking enemy at dawn. Committing another SCR 284 at forward trucking Headquarters.Ex. O.

0600- "A" Company moving out to relieve "Buick" force attacking Martelange from the south.

0830- Company "C" arrived at 0820 with three squads and some Headquarters personnel. Lt. Koenig and one squad at Neufchateau to pick up stragglers. Lt. Husch and platoon at Bailey bridge on N4. Ex. O.

0830- Enemy trucks reported at Jenneville by Lt. French at 0830.

0845- "B" Company and 1278th are cut off. Elements of "C" Company are stopped just east of Fauvillers. Need some Rcn vehicles to get them out.

0900- To Company "B" Rcn vehicles are enroute to your Hdqtrrs.

0950- Paratroopers reported in vic. Fauvillers P520420 at 0930.

1045- Ordered all obstacles on N46 blown. Ex.O. and five squads under Lt. Russell to defend road blocks on N15 and fight a delaying action towards Neufchateau. No word from forward CP. Ex.O.

1100- Battalion received orders to assemble all personnel and proceed to Ste. Cecil.

1207- To Company "C"- Disengage and return to Battalion CP. S-3

1207- To Company "B"- Disengage and return to Battalion CP.

1245- Message from Company "A"- Should we blow crater on N4 south of Martelange to increase its effectiveness.

1300- Contacted Major Kohler. Delivered message. Five squads at Junction of N46 and N15 ready to blow abatis and defend. Blocks on N45 not blown. 552 Engineers will stay and defend blocks, till remainder outfit withdrawn. Enemy just outside Witry, Company "C".

1320- Obstacles blown on N4. Company "A"

1330- To Ex.O.- Disengage and return to Battalion CP. Release attached units to their CPs. If you have contact "C" Company notify them also. S-3.

1500- Ex.O. arrived CP with only a portion of "B" Company.

"A" Company in area (Hachy).

"C" Company in area (Hachy). Battalion preparing to leave CP for destination (Ste. Cecil vicinity Florenville (P2028).

1630- Battalion convoy moving out in following order: H&S, Co."A", Co. "B", and Co."C". Major Perry staying behind to collect stragglers.

2030- Arrived destination Ste. Cecil (P2028). Battalion personnel staying for night in two hotels. Orders received to proceed in the morning to Givet (09175) and meet advance party of 1128th Engr. Group.

22 DECEMBER 1944

1200- Battalion convoy reached Givet picked up advanced party and proceeded to destination Malonne (J9108).

1660- Arrived destination at Malonne (J9108). Bn. living in old Monastery.

Morris G. West
Captain, Corps of Engineers
S-2

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COMPANY "A", 299TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION,

APO 230
25 Dec. 44

SUBJECT: Battle History 17 Dec 44- 22 Dec. 44

TO : Commanding Officer
299th Engr, (C) Bn.
APO 230, U.S. Army

1. Original location of Company CP. Hachy, Belgium
Company alerted 170200 A Dec. 44 due to enemy break through.
Company departed Hachy, Belgium 191100 A Dec. 44. Company arrived
Lavorichie, Belgium 191400 A Dec. 44.

2. First Platoon-

Third squad left Lavorichie, Belgium at 1400 to place
demolition on roads on an imaginary line between Ortheuville and
Bartogne, Belgium. At 191600 A Dec. 44 Completed demolition on
bridge P452673 and started toward Bertogne. Approximately two miles
from Givroville heard small arms fire and civilians notified us of
enemy tanks on the road, because of the narrowness of road the squad
returned with the intentions of approaching Givroville by N26.
Sgt. Banach and six men remained at bridge P452673 all night with
orders to blow upon contact with the enemy. Small arms fire
continued to get closer and about 2200 a tracked vehicle
(unidentified) approached the outpost, as the two men on the outpost
crossed the bridge they were fired upon by enemy small arms. The
bridge was then blown and the men departed to the Bailey at
Ortheuville and finally making their way to the Company CP in
Lavorichie at 0045.

3. Second squad left Lavorichie at 1630 to take over abatis
from 1278th Engr. (C) Bn. at P388318 and arrived there at 191730 A
Dec. 44 with instructions to blow when enemy came in sight. Abatis
was blown at 1930 that evening and the squad departed for St.
Hubert, but found another abatis and crater on N28. By taking a
trail through the woods the squad arrived at Nassogae where they
spent the night at a sawmill. At 220745 A Dec. 44 this squad left
Nassogae with a Captain from 12th Army Group and proceeded to
Marche. Upon arrival an attempt was made to reach 1128th Group
Headquarters but were unable to do so and therefore attached
themselves to the 51st Engrs. Squad was sent at 221300 A Dec.44 to
blow abatis at Rochefort. Abatis was blown at 1630 and the squad
attempted to return to Marche but enemy action prevented them from
going there directly and after a wide detour they arrived at 1930.
At 2000 they were put in a defensive position with the 51st Engrs on
the edge of town. At 230800 A Dec. 44 squad withdrew from Marche to
Nettinore arriving there at 1200. At 1500 they were forced to
withdraw and being unable to start their truck it was destroyed
with The squad then rejoined the Company at Malonne, Belgium.



Battle History Cont.

4. First squad left Lavorichie at 191600 A Dec. 44 to place demolition on bridge at Sprimont with instructions to blow upon sight of enemy. Job was somewhat delayed because of lack of explosives which finally arrived and job was completed at 2100. At 192200 A Dec. 44 enemy tanks approached the bridge and the bridge was demolished. At 200400 A Dec. 44 demolition was placed on bridge at Lavorichie. Tanks and small arms fire were heard in this vicinity throughout the night. At 200830 bridge was blown when it came under enemy small arms fire.

5. First platoon was then ordered at 201000 A Dec. 44 to withdraw from Lavorichie to battalion CP at Hachy, Belgium.

6. At 210800 A Dec. 44 First Platoon moved out of Hachy and proceeded to a road crater on N-4 to relieve a company already at the sight. Upon arrival at 0930 a strong defensive position was set up and preparations for enlarging the crater were made. At 211300 A Dec. 44 crater was blown upon order from Battalion S-3 and the platoon withdrew to Hachy, Belgium. First platoon less the second squad left Hachy, Belgium at 211630 A Dec. 44 and proceeded to Malonne, Belgium arriving there at 231700 A Dec. 44.

7. Second Platoon-

Second Platoon left Company CP at Lavorichie on 191400 A Dec. 44 and proceeded to Ortheuville with orders to set up the bridge there for demolition and to defend it. Arriving there at 1430. At 1530 Lt. Stribling arrived from the direction of Bastogne and stated that his jeep had been fire upon by an enemy light tank and machine guns in a hay stack about 5 miles from the bridge on N-26. At 1535 Col. Rinehardt arrived at the bridge sight, after checking the position he ordered two other bridges to be prepared for demolition and to be defended. At 1540 two men were sent to a bridge to the left of N-4 but found it already occupied by the first platoon. Also at 1540 two men were sent to a bridge approximately 1 Kilometer to the right of N-4 at Ortheuville and prepared it for demolition and remained there. They were reinforced by elements of the 158th Engr. (C) Bn.. At 191730A Dec. 44 8 tank destroyers arrived at the bridge sight in Ortheuville and set up a defensive position. At 2130 small arms fire was heard in the direction to the left front of the bridge followed closely by a large explosion which later proved to be the demolition of a bridge. At 2200 the men from the demolished bridge came through this position and reported being fired upon after which they had blown the bridge, they had with them one unidentified civilian. These men and the civilian were sent to the company CP at Lavorichie. At 2215 tracked vehicle were heard in the vicinity to the left front and some artillery fire was placed on the bridge by the enemy. At 2300 a Captain Carr of the 158th Engr. (C) Bn. came in and brought a radio and a 50 cal machine gun. The 158th Engr. (C) Bn. CP was then contacted and orders were received that the bridge was not to be blown except on the order of the CO of the 158th Engr. (C) Bn. 200600 A Dec. 44 an enemy half track came to the rivers edge and then returned back up N-4. About 0615 two or three approached the bridge through the fog and were fired upon by the tank destroyers. Enemy brought small arms fire on the bridge wounding one man and fire from the enemy tank killed two men from other organizations.

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About 0730 an enemy tank approached and crossed the bridge and was knocked out by the tank destroyers. Three Germans came out of the tank and one was killed but the other two escaped into the thick fog after being wounded. At 0830 one enemy half track approached the bridge and was knocked out on the far side by the fire from our tank destroyers. Some enemy troops got behind the damaged vehicle and engaged our troops in small arms fire for about thirty minutes and then retired through the thick morning fog. About 0900 the bridge came under enemy artillery and mortar fire for a short while resulting in no casualties. About 1100 Lt. Wood took a five man patrol and crossed the bridge and searched the immediate area for possible enemy troops but found none. About 1200 L. Apt joined the platoon. After reorganizing they proceeded down N-4 toward N-26 in search of the enemy. At 1630 the order came to return to LAVORICHIE and consequently arriving at HACHY, Belgium the platoon departed from HACHY at 1730 arriving at MALONNE, Belgium at 231700 A Dec. 44.

8. Third Platoon-

The third platoon was sent out to prepare a line of obstacles south of N-4 from N-26 to N-15. A reconnaissance was made over the proposed line by S/Sgt. Krausnick at about 1600 on 19 Dec. 44. An unidentified Captain informed S/Sgt. Krausnick that his platoon was not in the right area, so he returned to the CP to report this and to get further orders. Lt. Apt, acting CO was out at the time, trying to contact Company "B" in order to tie in with the left flank of Company "B"'s line of obstacles. During Lt. Apt's absence, Major Kohler stopped at the CP and left orders to prepare for demolition a bridge north of N-4 on N-26 at P483643. When Lt. Apt returned, he sent S/Sgt. Krausnick back with two squads to prepare the bridge at P483643 for demolition per the orders of Major Kohler. The other squad under Sgt. Burt was to prepare any obstacles necessary along the predesignated line, along which the 1278th Engr. (C) Bn. was working. At 192100 A Dec. 44 S/Sgt. Krausnick took two squads east on N-26 and across N-4. He pulled the squad trucks off the road and sent a patrol up the road toward the bridge. Shortly an armored column came upon them, causing them to withdraw on foot. Both trucks were captured and one driver, Pvt. Corlett was taken prisoner. S/Sgt. Krausnick with three men began to work themselves back toward the CP. During the withdrawal, the three men became separated from S/Sgt. Krausnick and at about 2400 S/Sgt. Krausnick returned alone to the CP. Sgt. Napierala and Sgt. Stanbary led the remainder of the two squads back into the woods north of N-26 and east of N-4 and stayed the remainder of the night. The following day they worked themselves back to the CP but arrived there after the company had moved out. Other than the man that was captured, there were four men missing from the two squads, Pvt. Heinz, Pvt. Sims, Pvt. Alford, and Pvt. Thomas. Sgt. Burt's squad had found all the obstacles along the line south of and parallel to N-4 prepared, so he returned to the bridge at Sprimont and reinforced Sgt. Denno there. When this bridge was blown Sgt. Burt returned to HACHY at 200200 A Dec. 44 with his squad. He was sent out by Major Perry at 0300 to reinforce a provisional company of the 341st Engineer General Service Regiment at Neuperle, P564364.

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Battle History Cont.

Sgt. Napierala and Sgt. Burt returned to Hachy with their squads and the company at 2000 after being relieved from the 158th Engr. (C) Bn. at 1730 20 Dec. 44. At 0800 21 Dec. 44 the company left Hachy and arrived at Neuperle at 0845. Sgt. Stanbary set up security on the road leading from N-4 to Perle. Sgt. Napierala took a ten man patrol to Martelange leaving at 0900. He observed the enemy but made no contact. At 1200 the company was ordered to disengage and return to the Battalion CP at Hachy. Sgt. Burt had pulled his squad back to the reserve when the company had relieved the provisional company of the 341st Engrs. The crater was blown at 1230. Sgt. Napierala's squad failed to return by 1300, so the company departed and arrived at Hachy at 1330. As the company departed from Hachy at 211630 A Dec. 44 Sgt. Napierala and his squad returned and joined the company. The platoon departed from Hachy at 1730 arriving at Malonne, Belgium at 231700 A Dec. 44.

9. During the above mentioned action two men from the company were wounded and five men still remain missing in action.

ROBERT E. MANNIKO
Capt. Corps of Engineers
Commanding

~~1A~~
1B

COMPANY "B" 299TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

APO 230
26 Dec.44

SUBJECT: Battle History of Company "B" from 19 Dec 44 to 25 Dec 44
TO : Commanding Officer, 299 Engineer Combat Battalion

"B" Company received orders about 1900 hours on the 18th of December to be prepared to move out and establish road blocks. The Battalion S-2 and S-3 gave us the necessary information as to the location of the blocks and the Company moved from Habay, Belgium and the new Command Post was established at Witry, Belgium at about 0100 hours on the 19th of December.

The first platoon was assigned the mission of establishing road blocks by preparing two bridges in Martelange, (one on N-4 and the other on N-45-46) for demolition, a bridge at Bodange, a road crater on N-4 south of Martelange at the junction of the road to Perle and establishing a defensive position in the heights north of Martelange on N-4.

The second platoon was assigned the mission of preparing all access roads from Bodange north to N-15 for demolition either destroying bridges or preparing craters. There were seven sites in all prepared.

The third platoon was assigned the mission of preparing a second line of defense behind the second platoon from Bodange to Vaux by preparing for demolition and preparing craters.

All platoons were instructed to defend their positions as long as possible and to blow the gaps only to keep the sites from falling into enemy hands intact.

Communication was established with Battalion Headquarters by means of the 284. Each platoon had 300 radios but they proved unsuccessful in maintaining contact with the Company Command Post.

All blocks were established and the defending positions dug in by 1200 hours 19 December and preparations were being made to establish alternate positions. Up until the afternoon of the 20th of December no contact had been made with the enemy.

About 1630 the 20th of December the first platoon blew all gaps under enemy attack and a short time later two of the second platoon gaps were blown under enemy attack. About one and a half squads of the first platoon and one squad of the second platoon, the platoon leader and the platoon sergeant of the third platoon reported back to the Company Command Post.

What of the Company that was at the Command Post was assigned to Captain Manion to be used in a joint operation with a Company of the 1278th Engineer Combat Battalion in the attacking and retaking of Martelange.

The report of the platoon officers of the Company from the time they left the Company Command Post at Witry follows.

RICHARD A. STEEN

Capt. Corps of Engineers 299th Engrs
Commanding

(19)

COMPANY "B" 299th ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

APO 230
26 Dec 44

SUBJECT: Report of Casualties

TO: Commanding Officer, 299th Engineer Combat Battalion

At the time of the writing of this report there are 32 enlisted men missing in action and one man seriously wounded in action. Many of the men missing in action are expected to return to this organization.

Richard A. Steen
Capt. Corp of Engineers
Comdg.

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A/E

COMPANY "B" 299th ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

APO 230
26 Dec 44

SUBJECT: Battle History of First Platoon, "B" Company 299th
Engineer Combat Battalion from 19Dec44 to 25Dec44

TO : Commanding Officer, 299th Engineer Combat Battalion

After leaving Captain Steen at the command post in Witry my platoon continued on to Martelange. There one squad was sent to the high ground on the curve just north of Martelange to set up as an out post and to give cover to the men working on the bridge. One squad was give the job of preparing both bridges at Bodange, the road crater at the junction just south of Martelange about three miles on N-4. All squads commenced work immediately. I went to contact the E,C,A. I told them what we were doing, then went from job to job the rest of the night. All charges were placed that were on hand that night with the exception of the crater on N-4. Another platoon was using the compressor at the time. My radio not working I went back to the Company CP to arrange for more explosives. Captain Steen sent to battalion for some more and I went around to some of the other blocks and finally rounded up about a hundred pounds of TNT and 2 rolls of Primacord. I carried that back to Martelange and added it to what we already had on the bridge at Martelange. That afternoon more explosives arrived from battalion and the compressor reported to the crater on N-4 and that afternoon all blocks were completed plus an abatis that was put in front of my outpost. The rest of the day was spent digging in the positions we had and alternate positions. Time was spent bettering our positions until we were attacked by tanks and paratroops about 1630 the 20th of December. All bridges were blown then and the squad on the bridge at Martelange and the half squad at Bodange and myself got back to our Company CP and reported to Captain Steen just what had happened.

Elmer Donahoo
1st Lt. Corps of Engineers
Plt. Ldr

(21)

COMPANY "B" 299th ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

APO 230
28 Dec 44

SUBJECT: Battle Experience

TO : Commanding Officer, 299th Engineer Combat Battalion

On or about the 19th of December our Company moved up to the little town of Witry, Belgium to prepare road blocks reaching from Martelange to the road N-15 on a line running north west of from Martelange about ten miles long. The platoons were sent in different directions from Witry and my platoon, the first was sent to Martelange to prepare two bridges there, a crater about 3 miles south of there on N-4 and another bridge at Bodange about a mile north west of Martelange. All obstacles were prepared that night with the exception of the crater on N-4. It was finished the next morning when our compressor arrived. The next day I rounded some more explosives and Primacord from one of the other platoons and heavier charges were added to our bridges. One of my squads was placed on the high ground just outside of and north east of Martelange about a quarter of a mile from the center of the town. This squad was to act as an out post and to give cover to the squad working in Martelange. This squad also put up an abatis just in front of their position. The remainder of the second day was spent on digging in positions and alternate positions.

On the afternoon of the 20th at about 1630 our out post and bridges at Martelange were hit with about ten tanks (enemy) and an undetermined number of paratroops. When it was observed the bridges could no longer be held and the squad escaped back to our Company CP. Approximately 30 minutes later the bridge at Bodange was blown, with some difficulty, and the half squad there and myself made it back to the Company CP. There a counterattack was organized with what was left of our company (approximately 30 men including cooks, clerks and motor pool personnel) and one company minus 2 squads from the 1278th Engineers. We moved into Martelange on the night of the 20th and it was decided to attack at dawn. The attack was started the next morning with a platoon of the 1278th coming through the woods on our right flank and the rest of them coming up the road on our left. We were sent down the center and after the attack was well underway we found that we had no route of withdrawal. Enemy tanks and a captured sherman were at our front plus an enemy armored car, and a machine gun and some sort of heavy weapon was on our flank. The enemy had already come in from our rear and taken our vehicle. We held out in this position until noon and at that time the enemy had closed in all around us and demanded our surrender. Not being able to cope with the situation and knowing that one more shell would wipe us all out, we were forced to surrender.

We were taken into the center of Martelange proper and there found that the enemy had everything well in hand. Approximately a battalion of paratroopers came out of the woods that had not even been committed yet. We were interrogated there in Martelange by an officer of an unknown panzer unit and about 2130 that night we were moved from Martelange to Bigonville about 5 or 6 miles north east of Martelange. We were there until about noon on the 24th when the fourth Armored and 26th Infantrymen attacked the town. They had three of our officers together in a combination chicken coop and rabbit pen attached to a building their command post was in and during the confusion we escaped to our tanks. On the night of the 23rd a heavy artillery barrage was started on the city of Bigonville by our own troops and lasted for two days. During that same night the panzer outfit we were with was moving out and a paratroop outfit with some infantry moved in. The paratroops did not know we were there and we hid out from them until our escape. At the time of our escape our own tanks were firing at the building we were in, from the rear, and an enemy machine gun position was set up in our only doorway, plus the fact that the building was burning down all around us. The machine gun nest was moved temporarily, and at that time we made our escape to the tanks. We stayed with the tanks about an hour and a half until the infantry came through and cleared out the town. We were then turned over to the infantry and treated as any other prisoner until proven to be American Officers. Our identification was not satisfactorily established until we reached the task force headquarters. After giving what information we could furnish there, we were transported to our own collecting point and from there found a truck of our own and rode it back to our own headquarters. The most horrifying experience of it all was the two days under our own artillery and dive bombing. Our artillery cannot be fully appreciated until you have been under it yourself. The two officers that were with me from the beginning, all the way through were; Captain Richard A. Steen and First Lieut. William H. Seibert Jr.

Elmer Donahoo
1st Lt. Corps of Engineers
Plt. Ldr

COMPASNY "B" 299th ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

APO 230
26 Dec 44

SUBJECT: Battle History of Second Platoon "B" Company 299th
Enginer Combat Battalion from 19Dec44 to 25Dec44

TO :Commanding Officer 299th Engineer Combat Battalion

I left the Company CP at Witry at about 2400 and proceeded north on N-46 to establish road blocks as ordered. Half squads (about 6 men plus NCO) were left at bridge sites at Hotte, Menufontaine, Remoivile, and Cobreville with their basic squad weapons, demolition materials and pioneer tools. A full squad plus an air compressor was left at the important road junction of N-46 and N-15. By 0900 the following morning all blocks had been completed, with the exception of the one at Cobreville. I sent the compressor there to hurry up operations. I then reported back to the CP at Witry, picked up an additional crew from the kitchen force plus additional demolitions. I added a line NCO and established a sixth block on the bridge outside Remichampagne. At Captain Steen's suggestion another crew was formed from Company Headquarters men plus a line NCO and established a seventh block-crater- was prepared on the road junction Remoiville and Remichampagne. The three electrical firing devices were not enough for all blocks, and the four other blocks had to be prepared with non-electrical devices.

Checking up on block sites the following morning our first stop was at Remoiville. The four men there had captured four man enemy patrol a short time before. I escorted them to the command post at Witry where I found that two of my crews at Hotte and Menufontaine had blown blocks the night before under enemy armored attack. A third crew at Remichampagne had attempted to blow but the cap proved defective and the men were routed by enemy armor before they could be replaced.

I received orders from Major Kohler to complete the blowing of all blocks on N-46 with the exception of Cobreville and the junction of N-46 and N-15. As we proceeded north we blew the last of the bridges and left an additional covering force at Cobreville, with instructions to blow only if threatened by a strong enemy force. German infantry just off Cobreville to the east had been sighted.

I proceeded on with the remainder of the men to our prepared crater at the junction of N-46 and N-15, where we had set up our defenses and prepared to defend the block. That same day we received orders from the Commander of the 28th Division that the road was to be kept open if possible and the block was to be blown only to prevent armor from crossing. We were joined by three T.D.'s and a Captain from a Light Ponton outfit who was to take charge of defenses in this sector.

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At about the same time I proceeded to Vaux and contacted G-2 furnishing them with information that I had in my possession as to the location of the road blocks in our sector and the enemy activity in our sector. I was then told by a Lt. Colonel to blow the bridge at Cobreville where I had left about fifteen men. I proceeded with one man in a jeep and found the block partially blown and the men had departed. The civilians seemed to say that there was enemy in the vicinity. We completed the block and returned to the road junction of N-46 and N-15.

The night was quiet with the exception of small arms fire to the west which lasted until 0800 the next morning and let up a little just before daylight. Shortly after, German Infantry came over the hill toward us on N-15. They evidently knew where our blocks were and we assumed they had been told by the Belgian civilians. About six cyclists crossed the block and others stopped on the block and started to tamper with the demolitions. A heavy German tank approached the crater and someone let loose with a bazooka, destroying the tank. While the cyclists were on the block, Sgt. Nevil who was in charge at the time, gave orders to blow the block with the Germans on it and about six men he had with him as a covering force shot the rest of the Germans who were on our side of the block. Our men were pinned down by machine gun fire from the high ground but managed to make an escape 150 yards to the rear toward the main line of defense.

There was some panic among our men at the first heavy exchange of fire but after a few moments things were normal and our men took up positions on the firing line. This exchange of fire continued throughout the day, that night and the following day. The Germans concentrated some of their forces in small houses about a few hundred yards from our position where they set up machine gun nests. The T.D.'s blasted these positions but were not able to clear them out. The artillery did not have any success in hitting the houses. We had artillery support of two 105's to our rear. We fired several cases of rifle grenades and bazookas at the house but a lack of mortars kept us from clearing them out. The enemy was plainly visible many times and the men fired until out of M1 ammunition. We had 30 Caliber machine gun ammunition shipped up to us by jeep and reloaded clips with this ammunition. I established an aid station in a house about a mile to the rear, manned by my truck drivers and aid men. Many casualties from several outfits were treated and evacuated through this station.

That night about 1830 hours we received a report over the radio that columns of enemy tanks had cut through on our right flank followed by approximately one company of German infantry. Later reports told us that they had overrun several gun positions and cut off the road to our rear. At the same time the infantry to our right flank and we were under concentrated 20mm fire. This lasted for about a half hour when orders came from headquarters that we should escape if possible. The enemy then was on three sides of our position.

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A small number of our men were able to infiltrate towards Vaux. The main escape route was directly west then south until reaching Neufchateau. We reported into headquarters of the 28th division and were issued one blanket per man and allowed to get some rest.

The following morning we were reissued arms, entrenching tools and other essential equipment and I met Major Perry at Division Headquarters. Major Perry was able to get all of us with the exception of eight men attached to the 103rd Engineer Battalion. These eight men had been attached to the 110th infantry in a position outside of Neufchateau. Those of us attached to the 103rd Engineers spent the next two days putting in defensive blocks, minefields, and mining of bridges around the city. During the time we were there we located a few more stragglers from our outfit.

S/Sgt. Starowicz was dispatched back to the battalion command post by Major Perry and returned with a truck and when we had completed the laying of minefields and road blocks and turned in the necessary reports, Major Perry located the 8 men attached to the infantry and we left Neufchateau for the battalion command post. There were in this party, Major Perry, myself and 29 enlisted men.

The only casualty we know of was one Pvt. Mikolaicik who was struck by a piece of schrapnel from a high explosive shell and three machine gun wounds in his right arm. One man was reported missing.

Robert J. Russell
1st Lt. Corps of Engineers
Plt. Ldr.

COMPANY "B" 299th ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

APO 230
28 Dec 44

SUBJECT: Battle Experience

TO : Commanding Officer, 299th Engineer Combat Battalion

We were alerted December 16th 1944. Trucks were made ready for combat mission of Engineer troops. Consisting of demolition, tools, one 50 caliber machine gun with ground mount, one bazooka and anti tank grenades for M1 rifles.

We left our Company CP the night of December 18th driving in convoy. That night was very foggy and our arrival at the site was delayed, on the road junction N-15 and N-46.

On arrival at road junction N-15 and N-46 we detached from our convoy and prepared and placed security for working party. We then consisted of one 2½ ton truck, one air compressor and operator and our squad of men.

We immediately placed six 40 pound crater charges directly across the road and directly over a 6 inch tile which served as a drain across the road. At this point the road was on a hill about eight high with marsh land on the other side. Charges were so primed so as to be detonated either by prima cord which extended up the ditch on the other side of the road for a distance of about 50 yards and away from the enemy or by electrical assembly which extended up a ditch 75 yards. This operation was completed by daylight and the compressor was dispatched to Sgt. Cipperman at another site.

There was no enemy activity on the following day or night, the nights of the 19 and 20 of December. There was unusual military traffic of our forces. This seemed to be and probably was caused by battle going on for Bastogne. there was also considerable civilian traffic. Our forces moved out and back across our block with little plan. Towards the evening of the 20th it became increasing clear that all was not well as moving civilians were carrying bags and patrols coming from the direction of Bastogne. This increased our work as we had to search them and their luggage. At this time we were letting one third of the men sleep at night in shifts. I was laying down at about eleven o'clock in the evening of the 20th when Cpl Ketterer told me he had heard small arms fire to our right flank and at some distance. I got up and T/5 Donagher and myself took Cpl Ketterer up to the charge and told him to watch for the enemy. We had the men who were resting so placed that they could be alerted quickly.

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About two o'clock in the morning of December 21st we heard machine gun fire and noted a brilliant flash of light coming at intervals from the direction of Bastogne. Shortly after we heard motors racing towards us. We halted the lead vehicle which was a recon car. The driver stated that there was an enemy tank one half mile up the road with a searchlight on it and that it had shot up one of their jeeps. (This convoy had 6 or 8 vehicles in it). They left and I left to alert all our men while I informed the men on duty and gave them instructions. Then two GIs came running from the direction of the tank. We halted them and tried to get them to help us but they were too terrified and of no use to us. We could have held them of course but did not think they would be a good influence on the rest of us. The tank was firing now down the road and across it. We stayed alerted and after about an hour the tank was either driven off or left on account of daylight. During the daylight hours of December 21st there was a general withdrawal of our equipment and forces from Bastogne. This made us glad we did not blow our block during the excitement of the night before. By nightfall there was no traffic except a straggler or two in the form of civilians and GI. This left us alone for all we knew with a squad of men and only enemy troops before us except we were told the 101st and 82nd airborne held out at Bastogne. We felt we could not blow our block until we had give any of our troops still able to escape a chance.

Late in the evening the TD outfit came as well as the Engineer and the field artillery. They set up position to our rear so as cover the road and to get the most out of their equipment. We then placed our men in position up along the ditches on both sides of the road away from our charge. The Engineer Captain placed his men at the military crest of the slope and along the road that ran at right angles to our positions and N-15.

Captain Anderson placed three men in a foxhole with a bazooka. This position was about 50 yards to the left of N-15 and about 200 yards from the charge. I later found out that the man with the bazooka knew practically nothing about it. I told him what I knew and the range of any probable shot he would get. He learned well because he knocked out a jerry tank with his second shot the following morning.

Just at dawn on December 22nd Motors were heard coming from enemy territory. They stopped about 50 yards from our charge and several jerries came on foot to the exact spot of our charge and started looking around. We could not see that they were jerries until they talked and then our men opened fire killing or wounding several on the spot. The man with the bazooka knocked out their half track and tank. The jerries returned fire with burp guns and from a machine gun from a stone house about 100 yards from our charge. We withdrew our men at my order up the road to a position supposedly held by other troops.

I say supposedly held by other now because our trucks which were parked behind some stone buildings loaded with troops who were panicking and were supposed to be protecting us at the charge.

This left Cpl Ketterer alone at the (hell box) detonating charger and under heavy fire. I called down the ditch to him and we held a hurried conversation as to whether or not to blow the charge. We decided we could not stay much longer and with the jerrieds trying to cut our wires I grabbed the charge handle and said a prayer and gave it a twist. The charge went off as planned and we crawled back up the ditch under heavy fire. The rest of the day was spent protecting the crater and cost the enemy several dead and casualty. At night fall we were forced to withdraw in orderly fashion due to the collapse of infantry on our right flank. We came out with no dead and only minor injuries to our squad. We were attached to the 28th infantry until a Company Officer came and took us back to our battalion. We suffered five cases of trench foot.

Robert C. Nevil
Sgt.Co"B" 299th Engrs.
Squad Leader

COMPANY "B" 299th ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

APO 230
26 Dec 44

SUBJECT: Battle History of Third Platoon, "B" Company 299th
Engineer Combat Battalion 19 Dec 44 to 25 Dec 44

TO : Commanding Officer, 299th Engineer Combat Battalion

The third platoon proceeded from Witry at 0100 to a bridge about 500 yards south of Winville. I left third squad at this point to prepare bridge for demolition. I took the rest of the platoon to Sure and left the second squad there with instructions to prepare bridge at Sure and also bridge about 300 yards north of Sure for demolition. I took the first squad to a bridge about one half mile northwest of Sure on the Sure-Vaux road and left them there with instructions to prepare bridge for demolition. Reported back to Company CP at Witry at 0600 for further instructions. The third platoon was also responsible for Company reserve composed of headquarters platoon personnel which was held at Witry. Left Company CP at 1000 and visited demolition sites and found them all completed at 1200. Worked until dark digging in machine guns, bazookas and foxholes. This was completed by 1000 20 December. The morning of December 20th I was informed another road block was necessary about 300 yards north of Sure. Demolitions were obtained from Company "C" and men from the Company reserve. This block was completed at 1700. Returned to Witry and found the CP had moved. Captain Steen returned at approximately 2100 hours. The platoon sergeant and myself were attached to the task force attacking Martelange.

All blocks but one were blown on the morning of 21 December 1944. Five of the men in the platoon were attached to the second platoon after the blowing of the obstacles and the rest of them reported to the Battalion at Hachy, Belgium.

WILLIAM H. SEIBERT JR
1st Lt. Corps of Engineers
Plat Ldr

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HEADQUARTERS
527TH ENGINEER LIGHT BATTALION COMPANY
APO 403 U S Army

BULGE

30 December 1944

Subject: Commendation

To : Commanding Officer, 299th Engineer Combat Battalion, APO 403,
U S Army.

1. It is desired that official recognition and commendation be given to the Officer and enlisted men of your organization (names unknown to me), who helped in the defense of Vaux les Rosieries, a portion of which I was in charge of.

2. These men unhesitatingly performed all tasks given them, in a superior manner. They are a distinct credit to your organization.

RICHARD C ANDERSON
Capt. 527th Engr LP Co.
Commanding

1st Ind.

/arp

HEADQUARTERS, 299TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION, APO 230 U.S. Army, 7 Jan/45

TO: CO. Co "B", 299th Engr C Bn. APO 230

1. Records disclose the following named men of your organization are concerned in the basic communication:

1st Lt. Robert J. Russell	T/5 Howard R. Tayler ?	Pvt. Paul N. Huffman
S/Sgt John J. Starowicz	Pfc Victor J. Basta	Pvt Angelo NMI Manna
Sgt Robert C. Nevil	Pfc Paul J. Ferris	Pvt Joseph NMI Markle
T/4 Ralph N. Pollard	Pfc Adelic NMI Mistriner	Pvt Theodore A. Mikalco
Cpl Anthony W. DeTomaso	Pfc Claude L. Pearce	Pvt Marshall NMI Parnou
T/5 Patsy M. Cantelmo	Pvt Gerald NMI Chapman	Pvt Joseph NMI Pascale
T/5 Joseph H. Coyle	Pvt Anthony T. Contrera	Pvt Vernon A. Sines
T/5 Leonce J. Haydel	Pvt Frank J. DeMauro	Pvt Jack A. Willet
T/5 Stanley J. Ketterer	Pvt William H. Dickinson	Pvt John B. Wilson
Cpl John NMI LaMantia	Pvt John C. Doerfel	Pfc Paul J. Jennings-Med

2. It is desired that each individual be personally commended for his action.

MILTON A. JEWETT
Lt. Col. Corps of Engineers
Commanding

Reproduced Headquarters Co. "B", 299th Engr. C Bn., 7 Jan 45

~~Copy to [unclear] [unclear]~~

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HEADQUARTERS, 299TH ENGINEER COMBAT BN.

APO 230
26 Dec/44

SUBJECT: Battle History of Company "B" Task Force for the attack on Martelange 21 December 1944.

TO : Commanding Officer, 299th Engineer Combat Battalion.

At 1745 on 20 December 1944 I received orders to meet with the Company Commander of Company "C" 1278th Engineer Combat Battalion at Habay-La-Neuve at 1800 hours. At approximately 2030 hours, Company "C", 1278th Engineer (C) Bn. arrived at Habay less two officers and one platoon. After briefing these two officers as to our mission we moved out in convoy for Company "B" 299th Engineer Combat Battalion CP located at Witry arriving there at approximately 2330 hours with five short squads. The rest of the convoy had been separated enroute. I reported to Major Kohler who was in charge and was given our mission and plans for the attack on the town of Martelange. At 0112 on the 21st of December this task force moved forward in a deployed convoy with a $\frac{1}{4}$ ton with .30 Cal. machine gun and a $2\frac{1}{2}$ ton truck with a .50 Cal. machine gun as point vehicles. We arrived at our predetermined trucking point at approximately 0200. The task force then detrucked and moved forward on foot to the west edge of the town of Martelange where the men were deployed along N 45-46.

A five man patrol was sent out immediately from Company "B" 299th Engineer element with the mission of locating the blown bridge on N 45-46 and to obtain information as to the location of the enemy and the terrain around the bridge. This patrol returned about 30 minutes later with information as to their arriving at the bridge some 600 yards forward and had seen no enemy activity and to the best of their knowledge, they had not been observed. Simultaneously, another five man patrol from Company "B" 299th Engineers under the direction of Corporal Kelly was sent out with the mission of contacting friendly forces known to be advancing from the south, towards Martelange on N 4. They were to follow the west and south edge of town until they came to N4. They returned at approximately 0500 with the information they had crossed the stream southwest of Martelange on an old wagon bridge and reached a point along the south edge of town in the vicinity of a sawmill where they were brought under flares and pinned down by machine gun fire. They withdrew by crawling back to a point where they could no longer be observed and returned to the forward CP. They were unable to reach N4 by this route. At about 0400 a patrol was sent out from Company "C" 1278th Engineers with the mission of crossing a tram bridge across the site where Company "B" 299th had blown the bridge on route N 45-46. They were to reconnoiter the territory to the south edge of town. They were driven back by small arms fire when they attempted to cross the tram bridge and returned to the forward CP with one casualty. At approximately 0530 one platoon of Company "C", 1278th Engineers under the direction of the platoon sergeant was sent back along N 45-46 to cross the stream on the wooden bridge forward of the town of Redelange and to take a position on the edge of the woods south of the town of Martelange, for an attack contemplated at dawn. When they were ready they were to give a signal y flashlight. They reached their point and signaled at approximately 0815. Company "B" was assigned the mission of advancing on the town by the route reconnoitered by Corporal Kelly and were to attack at dawn from the vicinity of the sawmill.

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Note: The following narrative is by Captain Steen, Company Commander, Company "B", 299th Engineer Combat Battalion from the time his unit left the forward CP until his return to the 299th Engineer Headquarters.

"Myself, Lts. Seibert and Donahoo and about 30 men were sent across a small stream to the right of the road and into a valley to proceed towards Martelange in the attack. We could see the 1278th moving down the road on our right and on our left. We came up to the sawmill on the outskirts of Martelange which had a large stock of lumber outside the mill. The mill was a stone building. About the time we reached the mill the enemy opened up on the roads firing into the 1278th men with 88s, mortar and rifle fire and they were forced to retreat and we were left with what men we had with no support on our flanks. There was machine gun fire behind us. We were receiving mortar fire and fire from 88s.

We set up defensive position in the mill and in the yards trying hold out until reinforcement came. We had no avenue of withdrawal. About 1100 Lt. Donahoo with his men who were in the yards were forced to give up. We, that were in the mill, continued holding out until 1150 at which time they had us completely pinned down, with machine gun fire in the windows until we could not get up to return the fire. They had us completely surrounded, were closing in, and were ready to drop hand grenades in the windows when we surrendered.

The Germans marched us into Martelange and there interrogated us. We were able to identify in Martelange a battalion of paratroopers, two self propelled 88s and one sherman tank. While in Martelange the SS Panzer outfit treated us very well. That night we were evacuated to the town of Bigonville. I was able to identify only two wounded that I knew of our men. In Bigonville we were interrogated again at which time they took Lt. Seibert's and my identification papers. After interrogation, they placed us in a chicken house under guard.

On the afternoon of the 23rd of December, the town started receiving heavy concentration of American artillery fire. At that time, the Germans became excited and lost track of us. We piled up some feed bags in the corner of the hen house and hid behind them. After the artillery fire let up a little, some Germans moved back into the building but not the ones that had been there before. The didn't know we were in the building. We remained in hiding until the afternoon of the 24th when the American tanks moved in on the town and we were able to rejoin our own outfits. We were evacuated back through the Fourth Armored Division, identified by them as American Officers and returned to our out fit."

The second element of Company "C" 1278th Engineers was assigned the mission of advancing into the town along route N 45-46. All element were in position at approximately 0815 when contact was made with the enemy to the south and west of Martelange. Elements of Company "B" 299th Engineers were pinned down almost immediately at the sawmill with mortar, tank, small arms and machine gun fire. Elements of the 1278th Engineers came from the woods on the south edge of town and were driven back by machine gun fire, small arms and tank fire, when they attempted to advance out of the woods, The 1278th element attacking towards the bridge on N 45-46 were driven back by heavy gun fire from high ground east of the town and mortar, machine gun and tank fire from the town itself.

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At about 0830 four men from the detrucking area reported to the forward CP that they had been attacked by a company of enemy troops and stated that we were now completely cut. They also reported that an American jeep approaching the detrucking area was captured. Upon receiving word that we were cut off I proceeded to move the forward CP across a stream to a point of high ground southwest of Martelange. We set up all around defensive position consisting of one squad of Company "C" 1278th Engineers, 4 men from the detrucking area, one medical aid man from the 299th Engineers, three vehicle drivers and Sgt. Leach of Company "B" 299th Engineers who was guarding two Belgians picked up in the forward area. Upon given instructions to move, T/4 Hanson, the medical aid man, stated that he could not leave the CP because of the number of casualties that had arrived. I assured him that we would take all the casualties with us. This new forward CP was set up at approximately 0930. All casualties were evacuated at once through the woods to the south-our only means of evacuation and escape.

At approximately 0940 I instructed Captain Sullivan of Company "C" 1278th Engineer Battalion to withdraw all elements of his command from Martelange to the defensive position set up on high ground south of town to strengthen our defensive position from attack from the town of Redelange. About 1000 Captain Sullivan sent out two patrols to contact any friendly forces to our left flank and rear to see if any armor could be brought up on N 45-46. Captain Sullivan accompanied one of these patrols.

At approximately 1100 hours it was noted that element Company "B" had surrendered to the enemy in Martelange. S/Sgt. Green reported to the forward CP at approximately 1130 hours from elements of Company "B" located in the sawmill with the report that upon orders from the officer in charge all personnel were to evacuate any way possible.

At approximately 1300 hours I gave orders to the platoon sergeant the remaining portion of Company "C" 1278th Engineers to assemble and to abandon the position we had taken up and to return to Habay, through the woods directly south of our position.

At Louftemont I contacted elements of the Fourth Armored Division and tried to obtain transportation to return to the task force CP at Witry. They said there were enemy tanks on N 45-46 between Witry and Martelange and they could not get through. I returned to the 1278th Engineer CP at Habay-La-Neuve at approximately 1600hours.

AMBROSE L. MANION
Captain, Corps of Engineers

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HEADQUARTERS, 299th ENGINEER COMBAT BN.

APO 230
27 Dec. 44

SUBJECT: BATTLE HISTORY of "Buick" Task Force for the attack on Martelange 21 December 1944.

TO: Commanding Officer, 299th Engineer Combat Battalion.

At 1745 20 December 1944 the battalion was given the mission of recapturing Martelange. The Headquarters Company of the 341st Engineer General Service Regiment was attached to the 299th Engineer Combat Battalion for this purpose and was to move north on N 4 and in conjunction with a force approaching from the west, recapture the town.

This force was designated Task Force "Buick". It consisted of 140 men from the Headquarters Company 341st Engineer General Service Regiment armed principally with carbine and a weapons squad from Company "A" 299th Engineer Combat Battalion armed with one Bazooka and three 50 caliber machine guns. The force was under the command of 1st Lt. Harold R. Jenkins 299th Engineer Combat Battalion. Communications with the force approaching from the west was to be made by radio.

The force assembled at 1000 20 December 1944 at the junction of route 9 and N 4, four miles south of Martelange. At 1130 20 December the force moved north. It moved to 1½ miles south of town and then took positions around a crater that had been blown on N 4.

Patrols were organized to go into the town to determine the enemy positions and strength. They penetrated the town and were discovered and fired upon by small arms fire which forced them to withdraw. Additional patrols were sent to contact the force approaching from the west as no contact had been made by radio. They were unsuccessful.

At 0600 21 December 1944 the orders were modified to hold the position around the road block on N 4. At 0730 21 December 1944 the force was relieved by Company "A" 299th Engineer Combat Battalion.

HAROLD R. JENKINS
1st Lt. Corps of Engineers
Task Force Commander

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COMPANY "C" 299TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

APO 230
26 December 1944

SUBJECT: Battle History of Co. "C" from 19 Dec 44 to
21 Dec 44 incl.

TO : Commanding Officer, 299th Engr. (C) Bn. APO 230

On 19 Dec 44 1500 Company "C" under Lt. Koenig's command was ordered to Vaux-Les-Rosieres as reserve for "A" & "B" Companies who were maintaining a barrier line. The company bivouacked for the night at Vaux. Meantime Capt. Bunting returned to the Bn. CP from Paris. He was given the mission of reconorting Martelange and vicinity for enemy tank activity. He saw nothing and reported the fact to the Bn. CP by radio. He then went to his company bivouac arriving there at about 0500 20 Dec 44. He was informed of the existing situation by Lt. Koenig. Capt. Bunting then reported back to the Bn. CP at 1100 20 Dec 44. He received orders to relieve "A" Company from the barrier line generally forward of N-46 between N-15 and N-26. He then went back to Company "C" CP arriving there about 1400 and moved the company to the vicinity of Morhet arriving there about 1600.

The 1st plt was assigned the right half of the barrier line and the 2nd plt the left half. The 3rd plt was held for local security and reserve. The 1st plt area was in the 28th Div area and officers of the 28th Div would not allow the establishment of any barrier line and did not want the Engrs. around. The 1st plt then returned to the Company CP arriving about 2100. Everything was quiet so the men turned in for some sleep.

The 2nd plt under Lt. Husch had received orders on 21 Dec 44 at about 1500, at Morhet, Belgium to take his plt and proceed to LaVacherie, Belgium and report to the CP of Company "A" 299th Engrs for the purpose of relieving Company "A" and take over their positions. Upon arriving at LaVacherie he was informed that the CP had been moved and word had been left for him to report to the 158th Engrs. He reported to the Bn CP and was ordered to take his plt and go to point on N-4 near the village of Ortheuville where a bailey bridge was located. He reported to a Major and was ordered to set up a defensive position with his plt. at the bridge site. Company "A" then moved out. At about 2200 a plt from the 158th Engrs reported in and reinforced our positions. The bridge was previously prepared for demolition by Co "A" 299th Engrs and was to be blown only on orders from a Major of the 158th Engrs.

At about 2230 the enemy began shelling our positions. After about 15 min a heavy continuous barrage of mortars began. This was supported by machine gun fire. This continued until about 2130 when orders to withdraw came through. Previous to these orders the Major had radioed for reinforcements and artillery support which was promised but did not materialize. During all this time the 4 TDs did not fire. At the beginning of the attack one TD was knocked out.

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On 21 Dec 44 about 0200 a message arrived from the Bn CP to send all available men to Company "B" CP at Witry.

The 1st plt under Lt. Koenig was sent down N-46 toward Witry. They reached a point at the RR underpass on N-46 below Morhet where they were fired upon so they returned to the Company CP at 0400.

About 0300 a Tank Bn in the vicinity of the company CP pulled out down the escape route picked by the CO. The Company received word that the enemy was coming down the road toward the CP so they made preparations to move. They moved out to N-15 down to Vaux arriving about 0600 and 3 trucks were found missing. Lt. Koenig and a squad returned to pick up the stragglers.

Capt. Bunting then reported into a switchboard at Vaux and was informed a Colonel of the 28th Div about the situation. He then took the remainder of the company and left about 0700 taking N-15 to Neufchateau and N-45 to Witry arriving about 0820 with 3 squads and half of Hqs plt.

Lt. French commanding the 3rd plt was sent out about 0600 to try and contact Lt. Husch who was somewhere in the vicinity of Road-junction, N-4 and N-26 about 1 km north of Jennieville he met a German tank. He turned around and came back to Jennieville and warned a company of the 35th Engrs of the situation. He then proceeded SW down N-26 and met an American tank to whom he gave the location of the enemy tank. He refused to go forward (south) saying he was not a tanker only a observer from a PA outfit. Lt. French then continued on to Recogne land told a Capt in the 35th Engrs that possibly one or two of his road blocks may have been overrun based on information he had received from a 35th Engr officer that he had met. He then returned to Witry and rejoined the rest of the company arriving there about 0900 21 Dec 44.

Major Kohler was at the CP when Company "C" arrived. He sent all elements of the company out at about 0930 to investigate a report of paratroopers at Fauvillers which had cut off the task force fighting in Martelange.

The company less 2nd plt proceeded to Fauvillers and contacted the enemy at 1005. They cleaned out the town and captured 4 prisoners who were removed to CP at Witry.

About 1100 they continued their advance on foot toward Martelange. They got about 600 yards east of Fauvillers when the enemy shouted at them in front. They continued to advance and were fired upon. The fire became heavy and everyone was pulled back to an assembly area just around a curve and took up a defensive position.

One squad was sent out on the high ground along the left flank and half a squad was sent out to the high ground on the right flank. A half squad was also deployed to the high ground in the rear. They thought they had the enemy located in some haystacks to the front. A line of fire was build up on the enemy position and a patrol sent forward. At this time a heavy concentration of fire began. Artillery fire started dropping in the rear and small arms fire on the flanks. Everyone possible was pulled back and they fell back to the road junction of N-46 and N-45 where the roadblock was reinforced with half a squad and the rest of the company went back to the CP at Witry. The point of the column consisting of Lt. French and 4 EM at the time the firing began were pinned down and

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were unable to get back when the rest of the company pulled out.

When Capt Bunting returned to the CP he received orders from Major Kohler to contact the two TDs that were attached to 552d Engrs to protect their road blocks. To see if they would help us neutralize the enemy outside Fauvillers. The TDs would not go into action so he returned to the CP and reported the fact to Major Kohler. Shortly afterwards Major Kohler gave orders to withdraw and return to Bn CP at Hachy.

A jeep and a motorcycle were sent to pick up the men and trucks at road-junction of N-45 and N-46. The motorcycle did not get to the roadblock but the jeep did and while there saw 1st Sgt Mitchell and 1 EM coming down the road from the direction of the enemy. They had been part of the point that was pinned down and couldn't withdraw with the company.

Company "C" arrived at Bn CP at Hachy about 1600 21 Dec 44 and prepared to move out.

The remainder of the point returned to American lines at 1030 22 Dec 44 and Lt. French who was in command of the point told the following story:

"I was in the point vehicle with the mission of proceeding on toward Martelange from Fauvillers. About 1km out of Fauvillers on N-45 N-46 on a sharp curve four paratroopers were encountered after I had passed them at about 200ft. One enemy stuck his head up and open up on me with a burp gun. At the same time the machine gunner in my jeep opened up upon him with an M-1 rifle. The machine gunner on the vehicle in back of us also opened up on the enemy. The column stopped and the men deployed encircling the four paratroopers. Scouts were sent out from the main body to the flanks. The CO and 1st Sgt threw hand grenades into a stone building on the right flank. Three enemy were flushed. I shot the one that had a burp gun on me at a distance of about 8 ft..

The 1st Sgt Co "C" 1278th Engrs took the prisoners back to the CP. One more was brought in from the edge of the woods. We then made search of the houses and continued to advance along the road toward Martelange and I took the point.

About 600 yds on down the road a German yelled Halt. Everyone hit the dirt. Machine guns and burp guns opened up on us.

The enemy had MG's located as follows, one overlooking road junction, one up the hill 150 yds in a haystack on right flank, one to extreme right in a forest clearing. Capt Bunting set up one 50 Cal MG and one 30 Cal MG. The 50 Cal put the haystack on fire and put the gun out of action there. The 30 Cal gunner possibly scored a hit on MG on extreme right because there was only one man left a little later.

Sgt Gage got the lone rifleman between MG #1 and MG #2 with an M-1 rifle.

After that the enemy MG's kept myself and two EM that formed the point pinned down in a ditch.

Heavy Mortar or Artillery fire was thrown into the rear of the company.

The company pulled out leaving myself and 2 EM still pinned down in the ditch. 1st Sgt Mitchell and Pfc Brown were in the edge of the woods. This took place about 1200.

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At 1600 I made a run for it proceeded by the two EM. We crossed the valley to the left of the road and reached the top of the hill, where they pinned us down again until dark. After dark we made our way into Fauvillers where we inquired about German troops and received some food. There had been three Germans there but they had left and the women didn't think they had returned.

We left there about 2100 and got to an old barn where we stayed the night. The 4th Armored came up the road about 1000 22 Dec 44 and we surrendered to them. I reported to the first officer I found. After being cleared by a Capt I made a tour of the enemy outposts in a halftrack. I pointed out on their terrain map the possible points of contact. I returned to the Bn CP at Malonne about 1630 24 Dec 44."

WILLIAM J. BUNTING
Capt Corps of Engineers
Commanding

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COMPANY "C" 299th ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

APO 230
29 December 1944

SUBJECT: Personal experience of Lt. Vernon French
TO : Commanding Officer, 299th Engineer Combat Battalion

On 21 Dec 44 about 0400 Lt. Koenig came back into the CP at Morhet, Belgium and said the "Kraut" are just up the road aways and heading in our direction. We, I mean the Capt. and I really moved out in a hurry heading for Vaux about 0420. We went out a back way and it was so muddy I had my doubts that we would make it all. First I got lost in the jeep but with a compass I managed to keep going away from the enemy and ended up in the rear of the convoy. I then found that two squads of the 3rd platoon plus the 3/4 ton truck, two air compressors and the kitchen truck were missing.

In Vaux I was sent by Capt. Bunting to contact Lt. Husch and find out his status but on the road from Recogne to the road intersection of N-4 and N-26, I came upon a tiger tank at Jennerville and two 35th Engr boys had an advantage point so they could take care of it. We turned around quick and headed back to warn some of the 35th Engrs close to the scene.

I met a tank with a FA Officer in charge but he wouldn't engage it so I left him standing in the middle of the road.

I went to Witry where Co "B" 299th Engrs. had their CP as we were to make ours there also. Upon arriving and telling my story to the Captain, We reported to Major Kohler, who then told us to take the rest of the company and go into Martelange and reinforce Co "B" and the 1278th Engrs. Major Kohler told us there were about 15 German paratroopers on the road between Witry and Martelange. I, in my jeep at the point with a 30 cal MG mounted behind me with a 30 cal MG on a ring mount was a 2½ ton truck, the truck was about 125 yds back and in back of that was the C&R and two 2½ ton trucks and 3/4 ton weapons carrier from the 1278th Engrs.

Everything was fine until we reached about 1KM east of Fauvillers on a sharp curve, after the jeep had passed a Jerry popped up and opened fire on us. We did likewise and I hit the ditch landing on a manure pile. The MGs on both the jeep and the 2½ ton opened up and we covered all escape routes that the Germans could take. We advanced on the German position and in doing so encountered a concrete building, a couple of grenades went in there, nothing flushed. I was standing behind a sapling and looked down, there in front of me about 8ft. was a Jerry with a burp gun pointed right at me. I just pulled the trigger of my lcarbine to settle the issue at hand. Then two more were flushed and that made a total of three.

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They were wearing part German and part American clothing and had socks, American cigarettes and sewing kits in their pockets. They also had French grenades, burp guns, 8" knives and a communication saw. We sent them back in the 3/4 ton belonging to the 1278th Engrs. Just after the truck left a patrol in the woods flushed another German and he was sent back in a jeep. We checked all the houses and continued on foot down the road. I took the point and 1st Sgt. Mitchell took the left flank and Pfc Brown took the right flank. The rest followed at about 5 yd intervals.

About 300yds from the intersection a voice yelled out halt and we took to the ditch. It was about 8" deep and only three of us took to it, myself and the two boys right behind me. Three MGs opened up on us and the first burst hit a telephone wire above me and the wire coiled around my neck three times and I figured my goose was cooked right then and there but it slipped off very easy. The MGs kept us in the ditch and every time I moved it seemed all three cut loose on me and if they knew how close they came they probably would have kept on firing. They pinned us down at about 1145 21 Dec 44. The Capt kept the enemy busy by having the two 50 Cal and the one 30cal MGs go into action.

One German MG was put out of action. Then after a bit the rest of the Company moved out and Jerry started using artillery on us. The Company left us as gone because they figured the MG fire had got us. The enemy never tried to get us by moving in on us after the company left. We started moving backwards on our stomachs while still in the ditch but my overcoat started to make a billow over my head and the MGs cut loose again, so I shelled out of it and left it there. The two boys behind me crawled for about 200 yds and then made a run for it. I waited for thirty minutes and then made a break for it but the enemy never fired a round at me. This happened at about 1600 21 Dec 44.

On a hill back of a stone house I joined the other two men and we smoked a cigarette which really tasted good. I said we would make it across the valley and onto the other hill, to try to make the top and take the back way out. We crossed the creek and went up the other side but the MG covering that place didn't fire. We started for a hole on the side of the hill but when we were 20ft from it the Germans opened fire and we dove for it. He kept us pinned down to the ground and so I decided to wait until dark and then make a break. At 1830 we started back to Fauvillers and made it all right. At the edge of town we stopped at a house and they took us in and we questioned them about the Germans in town and whether we could sleep there. They wouldn't let us. Never found out until next morning that they thought we were GERMans. They fed us and we started out again to find a place to sleep. We found a big barn with a haystack in it and made that our home for the night. Early the next morning we moved to a far corner of the barn just as the owner was coming in and he did not see us.

At about 1000 22nd Dec 44 the armored moved in and it was american. That was one of the nicest things I've ever seen it certainly was a nice sight. We went out to report and they took us prisoners instead because I asked what the pass word was. They separated me from the other two boys. One Capt. believed my story and he took me in his jeep and I showed him the place where I was pinned down and possibly where other positions of the enemy might be. They sent us out scouts in half tracks and started shelling the woods to the northeast. I was hurried along from place to place then a Col. got hold of us and sent us back to Co. "B" as prisoners and they took our rifles and knives and a Major gave us a going over and another one took place a little while later given to us by a Captain but finally about 1830 22nd Dec 44 we were cleared. They put us up for the night and the next morning we had a medical check us and he declared us all right. We rode into Arlon in an Ambulance and the other two and I got off at the APO as I knew our mail was picked up there. I found that the mail clerk had not been around in two days but met another mail clerk from group and we went with him. There I found 8 others from the company and that was 11 all told. We stayed there that night and on the following day we located group and our organization.

We arrived at the Bn. CP at 2220 24 Dec 44. We had a very merry Christmas.

Vernon French
2nd Lt. Corps of Engineers
Platoon Leader

42

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Authority
235217
NSA WWA DAB

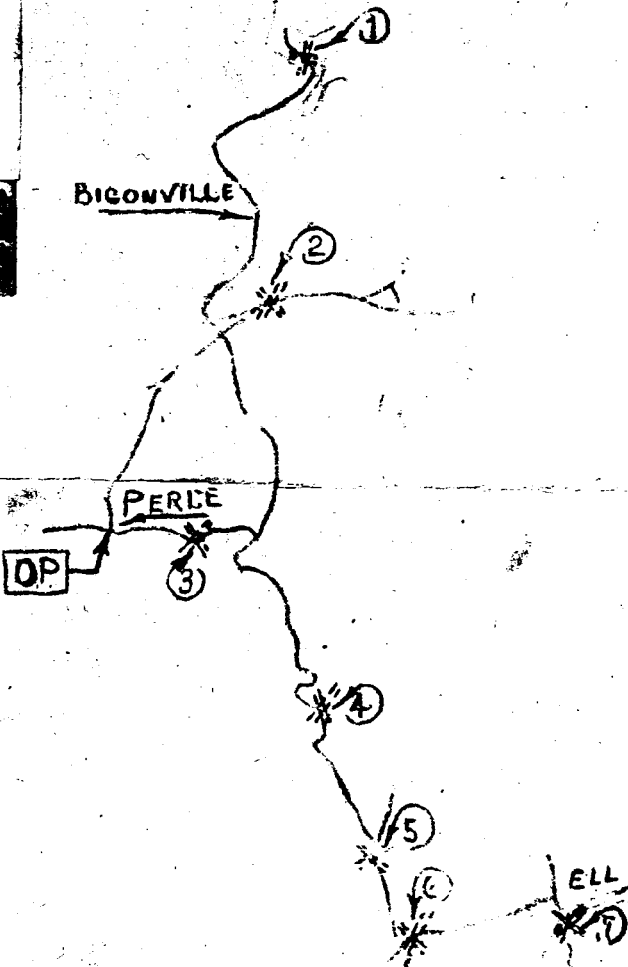
40

BIGONVILLE

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DECLASSIFIED
 AUTHORITY
 NND 735043
 DATE 5/8

10

MAP-REF.
 SHEET NO 17 ARLOM
 1:100,000
 9595 4338

NUMBER	TYPE OF OBSTACLE	LOCATION
1	BRIDGE - DEMOLISH	P412430
2	ABATIS IN WOODS	P605392
3	BRIDGE - DEMOLISH	P595362
4	GRATER RD. AT SHARP CURVE	P613335
5	BRIDGE - DEMOLISH	P621218
6	BRIDGE - DEMOLISH	P625305
7	BRIDGE - DEMOLISH	P648309
8	BRIDGE - DEMOLISH	P665309
9	BRIDGE - DEMOLISH	P675310
10	MINE - FIELD	P687317

COMPANY "C" 299th ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

APO 230
29 December 1944

SUBJECT: Personal Experience of Sgt. William M. McCracken
TO : Commanding Officer, 299th Engr (C) Bn.

We received orders, while at Morhet to proceed to Lavacherie and relieve Co "A" 299th Engr (C) Bn. of their positions at Lavacherie.

After at Lavacherie we were told to report to the 158th Engrs. Arriving there we were told that our mission was to hold a bailey bridge and not to blow it unless ordered to by a Major of the 158th Engrs.

As soon as we arrived at the bridge site I posted my squad and reported back to the PLT CP. After talking to Sgt. Redmond, I checked up on my squad to see if everything was all right.

Shortly after this the Germans opened up on us and I took cover in a ditch. I worked my way around to the side of a TD and started to fire my M1 at the enemy but a Lt. inside the TD told me to stop. About that time a MG opened up on us from the rear and it was covering our only means of withdrawing. I crawled within 10 feet of the MG nest before they saw me, I then opened up with my M1 and shot both the Germans in the MG nest.

We were told to move out so I got my squad onto a truck and try to get the men on the other side of the bridge back but I couldn't cross the bridge.

We moved out and returned to the Bn CP at Hachy.

William M. McCracken
Sgt. Co "C" 299th Engrs
Sgt (Squad Leader)

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HEADQUARTERS, 299TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

 APO 230
 24 Dec/44

SUBJECT: Minefields

TO : Commanding Officer, 1128th Engineer Combat Group, APO 230

1. The following is a consolidated report of mines and minefields laid by this Battalion for the period 16 December 1944 to 22 December 1944.

a. A hasty minefield was laid at P 516278 on 20 Dec. 1944. This field has been previously reported. See attached report No. 1.

b. AT Mines less fuse assembly were used as a cratering charge at P 504278. Sixty-four (64) mines were used - eight (8) holes with eight (8) mines and four blocks of TNT in each hole. In the area north of the road two (2) rows of mines with seven (7) mines in each row were laid and sixteen (16) mines were laid on the shoulder on the south side of the road. These mines have not been previously reported. See Report No. 2.

c. At P 564364 seventeen (17) mines were laid (no definite pattern) in conjunction with a crater on H 4. See report No. 3. These mines have not been previously reported.

d. Seven (7) AT mines at P 465499 laid across the dirt road adjacent to H 16, approximately 100 yards southeast of intersection. Previously reported.

e. At 464501 ten (10) AT mines were laid on the shoulder 100 yards east of intersection on H 15. Previously reported.

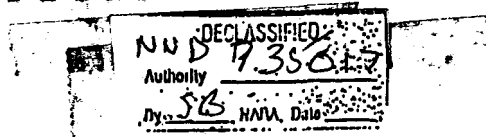
f. At P 464501 fifteen (15) AT Mines laid across road. Previously reported.

g. At P 430666 a hasty mine field of sixty-five (65) mines was laid on the dirt road as shown in sketch in report No. 4. A strip of ten (10) mines was laid across H 4 100 yards and 150 yards respectively on each side of the blown bridge as shown in sketch of report No. 4. This field has not been previously reported.

For the Commanding Officer:

 AMBROSE L. MANION
 Captain, Corps of Engineers
 Liaison Officer

S E C R E T

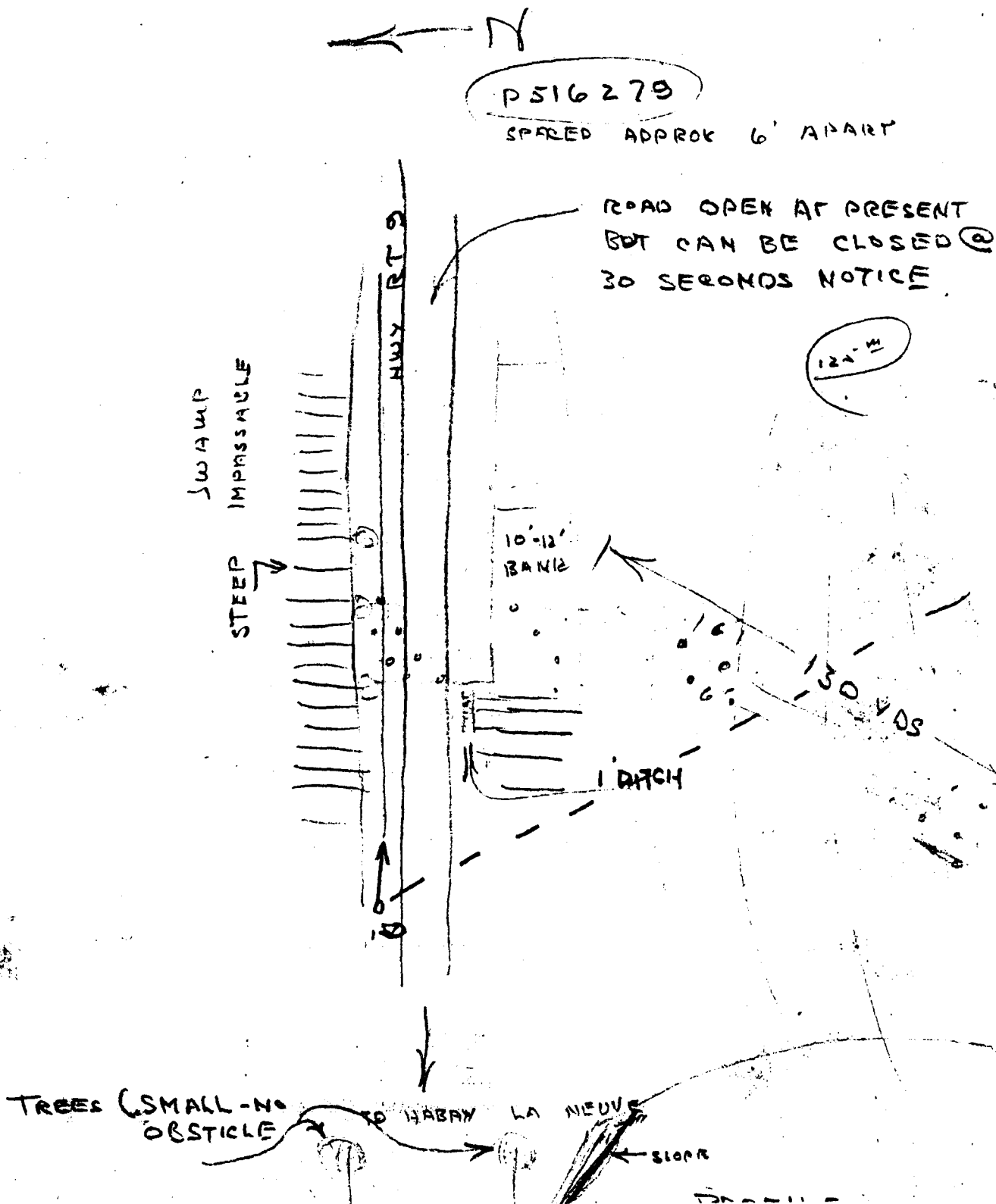


REPORT OF MINEFIELD

1. Report No. 1 Sheet 1 of 1 Sheets.
2. Map Ref. SHT. 17-1:100,000 GS#4336
3. Coordinates P 516 279
4. Date Laid 20/12/44 5. Signature of O. _____
7. Type HASY
8. No. Antitank Mines Laid. 125
9. No. Activated AT Mines Laid. 0
10. No. Anti-Pers. Mines Laid 0
6. Rank _____ Orgn. 299 E.

SKETCH:

SIGNED BY CAPT. WEST



REPORT OF MINEFIELD

7 Type Hasty

1 Report No L Sheet 1 of 1 Sheets

8 No Antitank Mines Laid 125

2 Map Ref Sat 17 - 1:100,000 GSGS 4336

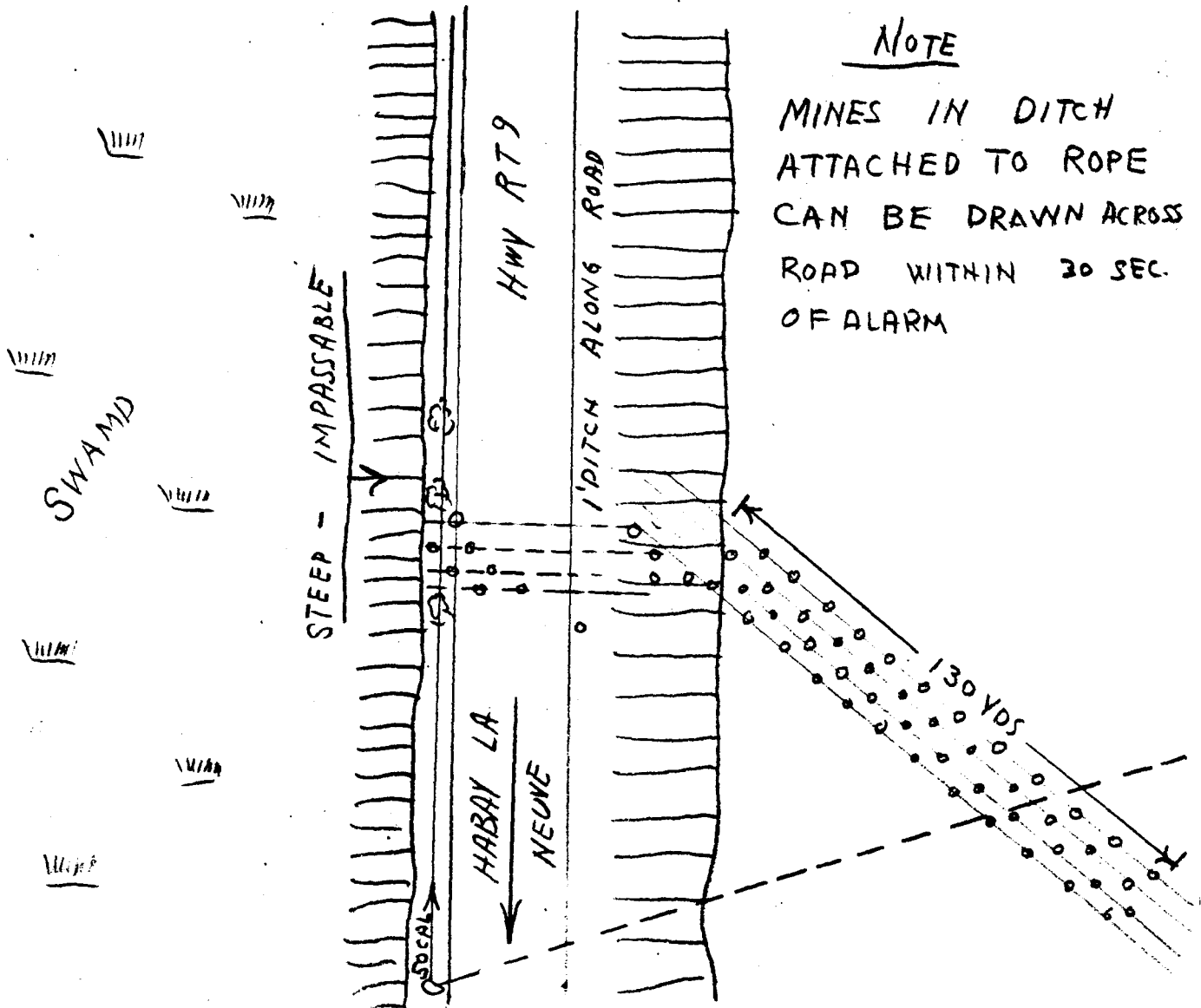
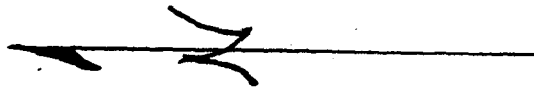
9 No Activated AT Mines Laid 0

3 Coordinates P516 279

10 No Anti-Pers Mines Laid 0

4 Date Laid 20/12/44

5 Signature of [Signature] 6 Rank Capt 7 Orgn H550299E



RE PORT OF MINEFIELD

7. Type HASTY

1. Report No. 2 Sheet 1 of 1 Sheets.

8 No Antitank Mines Laid 94

2. Map Ref SHT 17 1:100,000 GSGS 4336

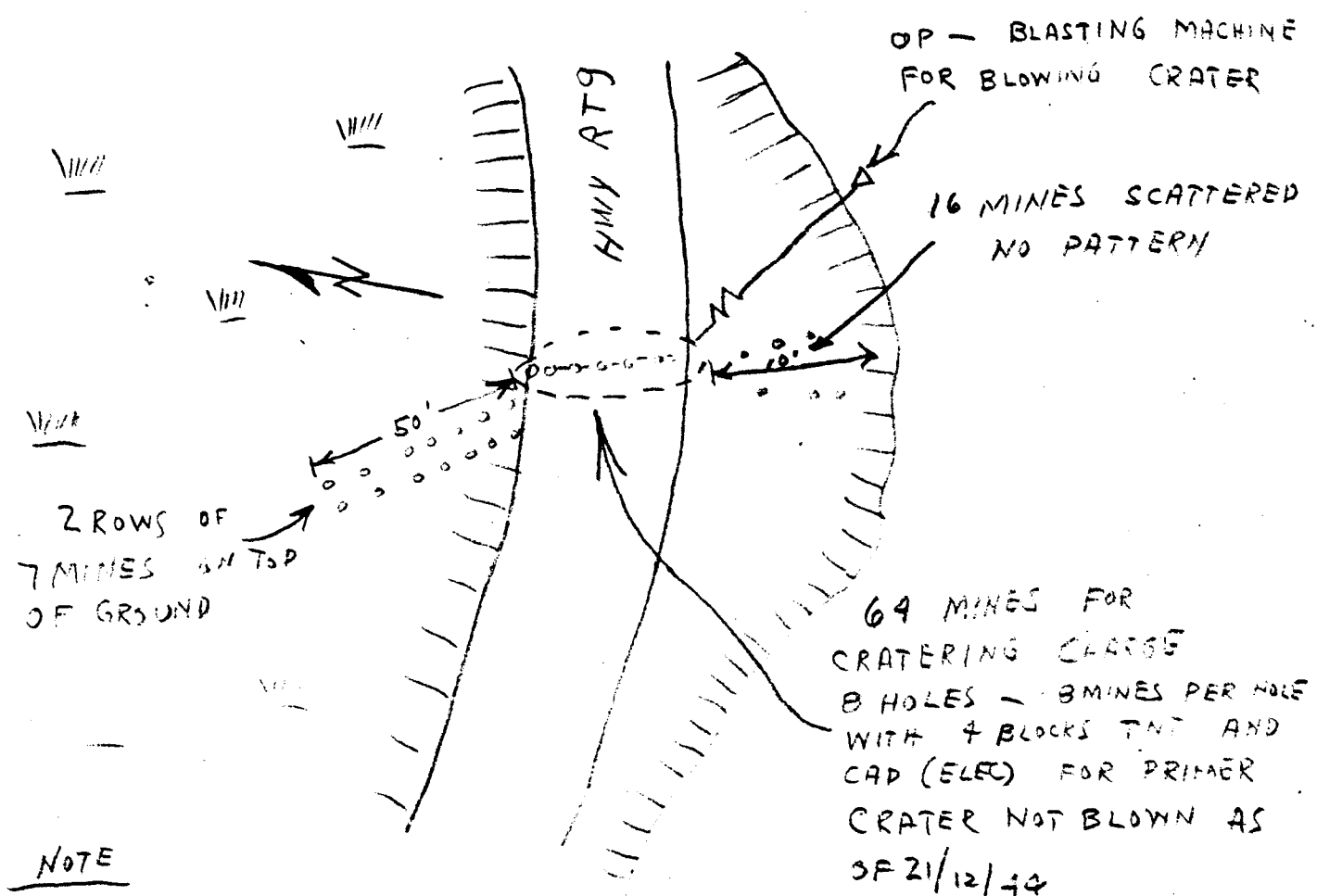
9 No Activated AT Mines Laid 0

3 Coordinates P504278

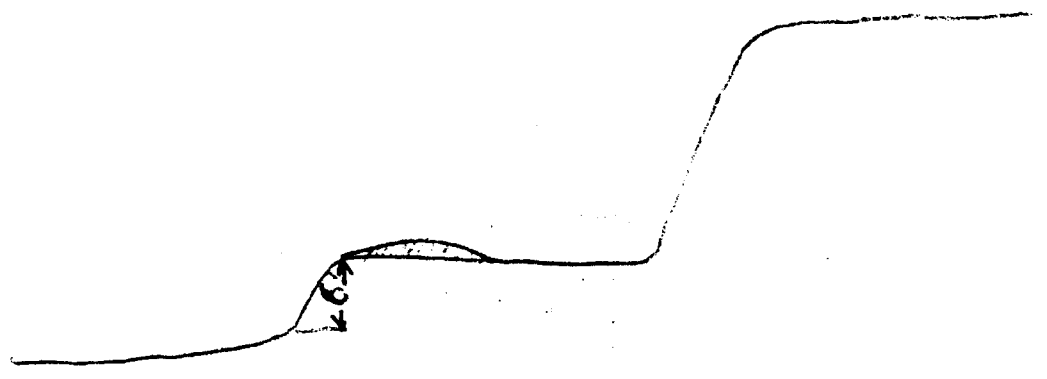
10 No Anti-Pers. Mines Laid 0

4 Date Laid 20/12/44

5 Signature of O. J. [unclear] 6 Rank Capt Org. 299E



NOTE
 NO MINES BURIED
 EXCEPT IN CRATER



UNIT OF MINEFIELD

1 Report No 3 Sheet 1 of 1 Sheefs

7 Type Has. /

2 Map Ref Sht 17-1:100,000 GS #4336

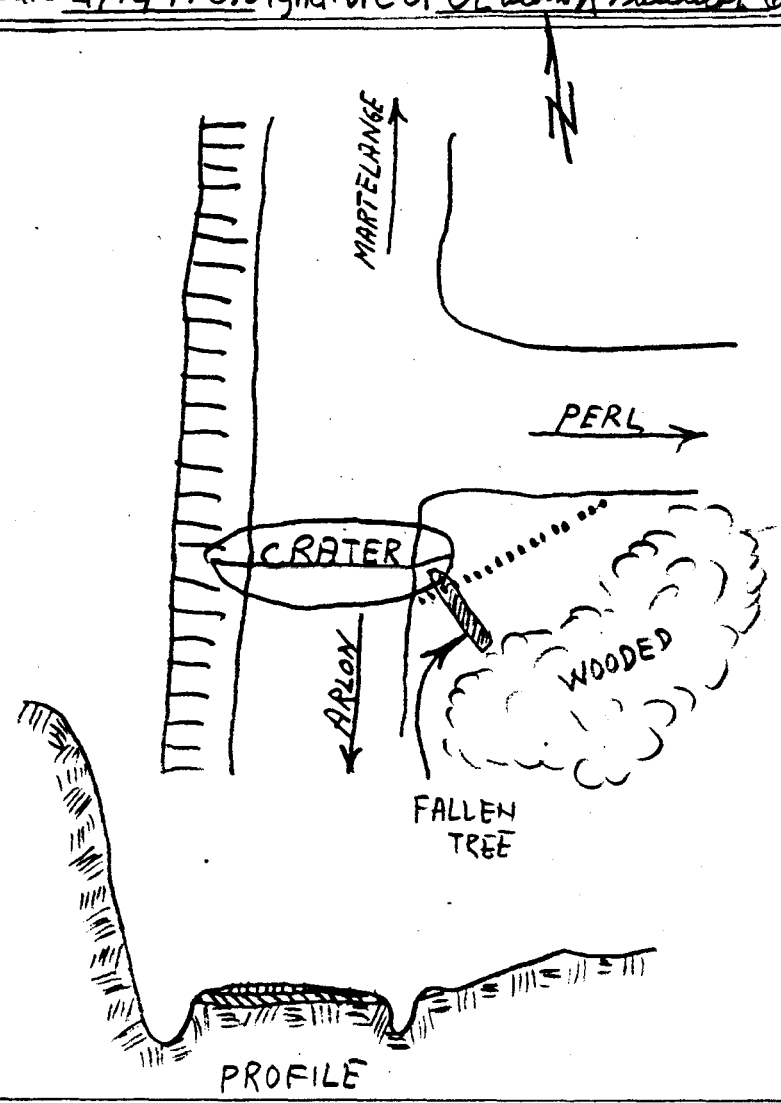
8 No Antitank Mines Laid 77

3 Coordinates P564 364

9 No Activated AT Mines Laid

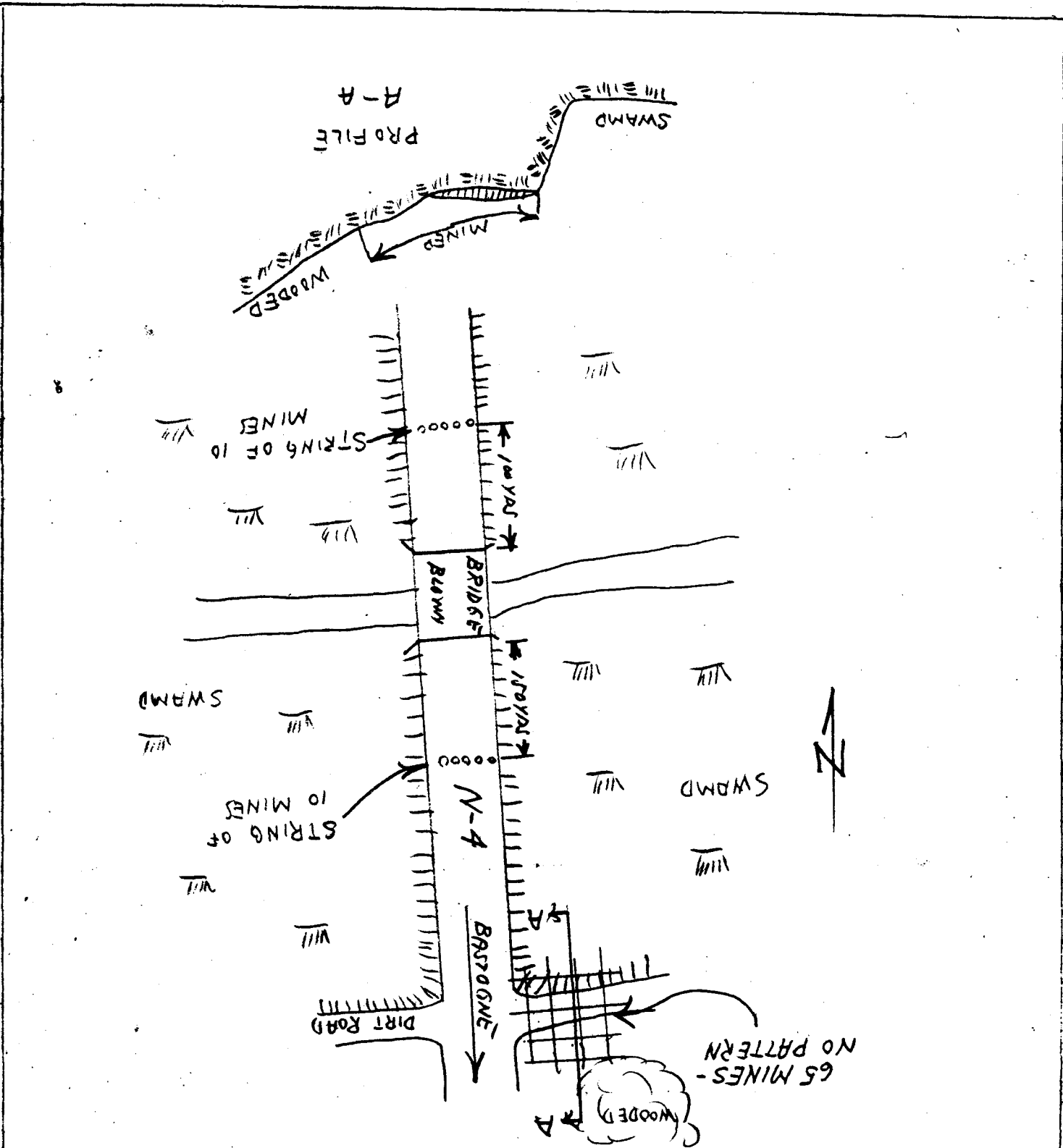
4 Date Laid 21/12/44 5. Signature of O Calvin P. [Signature] 6 Rank 1st Lt Orgn 299 E

10 No Anti-Pers Mines Laid



NOTE

No PATTERN, MINES LAID IN SHRUBS, IN APPROX LINE AS INDICATED IN SKETCH

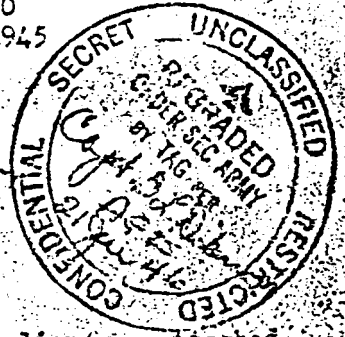


1. Report No. 4 Sheet 1 of 1 Sheets
2. Map Ref Smt. 17 1:100,000 65 4386
3. Coordinates P430666
4. Date Laid 2/12/44 5. Signature of O. B. Quirk
6. Rank 2nd Lt. Orgn Sec 299ENR.
7. Type Hasty
8. No. Anttank Mines Laid 85
9. No. Activated AT Mines Laid 0
10. No. Anti-Pers Mines Laid 0

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HEADQUARTERS, 299TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

APG 230
1 April 1945



SUBJECT: After Action Report 1 March 1945 thru 31 March 1945

TO : The Adjutant General, Washington, D. C. (Thru channels)

OPERATIONS:

At the opening of the period covered in this report, the battalion was attached to III Corps and in direct support of the 9th Armored Division. "A" Company was detached to the 14th Cavalry Group. The battalion had one platoon of the 998th Treadway Bridge Company attached.

To fulfill its mission, the battalion was maintaining roads, sweeping for mines and maintaining and guarding bridges. "B" Company had been given the mission of following closely behind CCA and "C" Company was to follow CCB 9th Armored Division. The company commanders of "B" and "C" Companies were issued orders to replace all treadway bridge placed by division engineers with culverts or Bailey Bridges. This was to be done as soon as possible as treadway bridge was a critical item.

1 March 1945: "C" Company built two culverts at Madersheim F 237399 and a 70' BS Bailey Bridge at Disternich F 245386 to replace three treadway bridges placed by 9th Armored Engineers that day. "B" Company performed road maintenance in support of CCA.

2 March 1945: An additional one-half platoon 998 Treadway Bridge Company was attached to the battalion.

4 March 1945: "B" Company built a culvert at Wollersheim F 170309 replacing a treadway bridge built by 9th Armored Engineers.

5 March 1945: Attached to 1111th Engineer Combat Group.

7 March 1945: "B" Company built 130' DD Bailey Bridge at Euskirchen F 343295. "A" Company reverted to Battalion control.

During the period 1 March - 7 March the battalion also strengthened bridges, removed abatis, filled craters and posted route signs and maintained roads to aid the division's movement.

8 March 1945: The Bailey Bridge at Euskirchen F 343295 collapsed at 0500. It was replaced 081945 & March 1945.

9 March 1945: Released from mission of supporting 9th Armored Division. Released 1 1/2 platoons 998th Treadway Bridge Company to parent unit.

9 March - 26 March 1945: During this period the battalion constructed and operated ponton ferries on the Rhine River.

Handwritten initials

4 JUL 1945
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VA RG 407, Box 18825
File ENBN-279-0.3

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BASIS: After Action Report 1 March 1945 thru 31 March 1945

On 21 March 1945 the Battalion assumed the guard and maintenance of the Treadway Bridge at Remagen F 647203 and on 23 March the floating Bailey Bridge at Remagen F 641203. The battalion also maintained roads, posted signs and did engineer work as directed.

26 March - 31 March 1945: On 26 March the battalion was relieved of all work on the Rhine and for the balance of the period did general engineer in the III Corps area.

CASUALTIES OF KEY PERSONNEL:

None

CASUALTIES, OTHER:

Private Floyd L. Scrivener, 38406791, KIA, 1 March 1945, Boich F 1235. Run over by 2½ ton truck while in Cavalry screening position.

Private Olaf Ostman, 42051814, LWA, 6 March 1945. Wounded while constructing Bailey Bridge at Euskirchen.

Private First Class Henry A. Czajka, 32840138, LWA, 10 March 1945, Boendorf F 6317. Struck by flak in bivouac area.

Sergeant Daniel W. Snell, 32833756, SWA (later DOW) 10 March 1945. While constructing ferry site on Rhine north of Remagen.

Corporal Arthur J. Kachreiner, 32841142, SWA, 10 March 1945. While constructing ferry site on Rhine north of Remagen.

Private First Class Edward S. Mirowski, 32841120, SWA, 10 March 1945. While constructing ferry site on Rhine north of Remagen.

Corporal Thomas W. Alexander, 32840611, SWA, 10 March 1945. While constructing ferry site on Rhine north of Remagen.

BATTALION CP LOCATIONS:

<u>Coordinates</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Country</u>
F 1140	Kreuzau	Germany
F 2234	Geich	Germany
F 3130	Euskirchen	Germany
F 4426	Rheinbach	Germany
F 5716	Bad Neuenahr	Germany
F 6224	Oberwinter	Germany
F 6322	Unkel	Germany
F 7822	Ammerich	Germany
G 0219	Hershbach	Germany
G 3924	Greifenstein	Germany

Milton A. Jenett
 MILTON A. JENETT
 Lt. Col., Corps of Engineers
 Commanding

- Incls - 2
 1 - Battle History Co "A"
 2 - 11 Photographs (in dupl.)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

APO #230

BATTLE HISTORY.

- 27 1200 A February 1945 - Company "A" attached to 14th Cavalry Recon. Grp. Co. placed on 4-hour alert status.
- 27 1630 A February 1945 - Company ordered to move to vicinity of Boich, Germany.
- 27 1745 A February 1945 - Second Platoon arrived Drove, Germany to contact and attack platoon to 32nd Cavalry Squadron.
- 27 1800 A February 1945 - Company "A", less second platoon arrived Boich, Germany, contacted 14th Cavalry Group Headquarters and established CP in Boich.
- 27 1830 A February 1945 - First squad of first platoon and second squad of second platoon moved out to move their respective platoons into a defensive position in the vicinity of Thum.
- 27 2145 A February 1945 - Second platoon maintained initial contact with 32nd Cavalry Squadron at Drove. Disposition for second platoon was: First and second squad attached to "Charlie" Troop and third squad attached to "Baker" troop. First squad, second platoon attached to second platoon "Charlie" troop. Second squad, second platoon attached to third platoon "Charlie" troop.
- 28 1530 A February 1945 - Lt. Batchelor reported 1st Platoon clearing mines at F-128350 Vic Boich for 18th Cavalry Squadron dispersment area.
- 28 1800 A February 1945 - Recon. made by Capt. Manniko as to possibility of road through Thum. Recon. not completed due to constant shelling of town by enemy artillery. Road was found blocked by two wrecked 4-ton vehicles in center of Thum.
- 28 1830 A February 1945 - Lt. Batchelor and third squad of first platoon left in three minutes notice to go with a troop 18th Cavalry Squadron to clear mines for defensive position on road between Thum and Drove at F-141863.
- 28 2000 A February 1945 - Third squad, second platoon moved out to Sulle and took up a defensive position at Fraugenheim.
- 28 2030 A February 1945 - First platoon sent 1 dump and 1 cargo truck with driver only, transporting second platoon B troop 18th Cavalry to Thum. Trucks will remain in Thum until platoon return to Boich.
- 28 2330 A February 1945 - Private Floyd Scrivner, 38406791, killed in action vicinity of Drove, F-154363. He was run over by a truck at cavalry screening position.
- 01 1700 A March 1945 - "Charlie" troop, 32nd Cavalry moved to Veisweis.
- 02 0300 A March 1945 - First squad, second platoon went on mission to sweep road clear of mines with patrol into Poll. They moved into Poll with second platoon of "Charlie" troop and secured the town.
- 02 0830 A March 1945 - Lt. Batchelor reported that his platoon was relieved of attached to 18th Cavalry Squadron.
- 02 1200 A March 1945 - Second squad, second platoon moved out with "Able" troop platoons and took the town of Kerrig after making a by-pass because of crater in the road and clearing a lane through a German Topf mine field.
- 02 1600 A March 1945 - Company "A", less second platoon left Boich en route to establish new CP at Irresheim and established CP at 02 1745 A March 1945.
- 02 1800 A March 1945 - Third squad, second platoon moved with one platoon from "Baker" troop, 32nd Cavalry Squadron and took the town of Ahren.
- 04 1300 A March 1945 - First squad, first platoon secured to relieve second platoon and let men have some sleep. Second squad with "Able" troop. Third squad, rest relief, squad first platoon with "Charlie" troop. First squad, second platoon with "Baker" troop at Ahren. "Able" and "Charlie" troop moved to Liblar to relieve infantry for push.
- 05 1300 A March 1945 - First squad, second platoon moved with "Baker" troop to Ober Liblar.
- 05 1400 A March 1945 - Released relief squad from first platoon.

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BATTLE HISTORY, CO. "A", 9TH ENGR (C) BR. (CONT.)

- 05 1500 A March 1945 - First platoon attached to 18th Cavalry Squadron and alerted to move.
- 06 0730 A March 1945 - First platoon left to support 18th Cavalry Squadron in attack on enemy position.
- 07 1245 A March 1945 - Co. left Irresheim to establish new CP at Liblar.
- 07 1600 A March 1945 - Co. arrived Liblar and established new CP.
- 07 1700 A March 1945 - Second squad, second platoon moved out with "Charlie" troop and swept roads for mines all night and moved in with "Charlie" troop to their final objective, Sechtem. Secured on the way were the towns of Bodorf and Tripplesdorf.
- 08 1100 A March 1945 - Company reverted to Battalion control.

Robert E. Mankiko

ROBERT E. MANKIKO
Capt., Corps of Engineers
Commanding

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

HEADQUARTERS, 290TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION,

APC 403
1 May 1945

SUBJECT: After Action Report, April 1945

TO : Adjutant General, Washington, D. C. (Thru channels)

OPERATIONS:

During the period 1 April thru 9 April the battalion remained attached to the 111th Engineer Combat Group and performed engineer duties in the rear of the Corps area.

Effective 091500 B April thru 170029 B April the battalion was given the mission of supporting the advance of the Fifth Infantry Division. At the time, the Fifth Infantry Division was moving in a westerly direction against the resisting "Ruhr Pocket."

Bridging was the major item that the division requested. The battalion installed or constructed seven (7) bridges during this period, in addition to maintaining division MSR's.

Shortly after the bridge at Arnsberg was completed, one of the abutments gave way and the bridge collapsed. The bridge was to be salvaged and returned to the Engineer dump.

In the early morning of 17 April all available vehicles were dispatched to 1159 Engineer Combat Group and from there would proceed to a forward FNE to transport prisoners from the "Pocket" to Brilon. Thirty-four (34) 2 1/2 ton trucks and three (3) weapons carriers were furnished. A representative was sent to contact the officer in charge of the FNE in Brilon to render all available assistance in providing suitable conditions for the enclosure. Tools for digging latrines and tanks for water storage were furnished.

On 18 April this unit was relieved from assignment of First United States Army and assigned Third United States Army, remained attached to III Corps and remained further attached to 111th Engineer Combat Group, except that for purposes of control during movement to new operational area, the battalion was temporarily attached to the 1159 Engineer Combat Group.

For the remainder of the period the battalion was assigned areas of responsibilities in the rear of the Corps area.

CASUALTIES: None.

- Incls - 3
- 1 - Operations Log, 10 pages (in trip.)
 - 2 - Intelligence Log, 3 pages (in trip.)
 - 3 - 18 Photographs (in trip.)

48

W. J. ...

CLASSIFICATION
Lt. Col. Corps of Engineers
Comd. ...

CANCELLED

BY AUTHORITY OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
W. J. Chapman 12/27
DOWNGRADING COMMITTEE 18 June 46

HEADQUARTERS, 299TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO 403, U. S. ARMY

1 June 1945

OPERATIONS LOG, MAY 1945

1 May 1945:

- 1650 - Instructions received thru Liaison Officer: Battalion is to move on 2 May to vicinity T 7814. Post "C" route south of Danube River.
- 1830 - Company commanders meeting: Instructions issued for movement by infiltration on 2 May.

2 May 1945:

- 0800 - Battalion proceeded to move to new bivouac area at T 791152.
- 1015 - CP opened at T 791152 Dorf.
- 1700 - Instructions received thru Liaison Officer: New area assignment. Drop all area north of Danube River and work in zone to Amper River. Move CP to Y 9892.
- 1100 - Company commanders meeting: Instructions issued on infiltration move for 3 May. Overlay issued assigning new area.

3 May 1945:

- 0300 - Battalion proceeded to move to new bivouac area vicinity of Y 9892.
- 1055 - CP opened at Y 985925 Zolling.
- 1450 - Liaison Officer informed CO that guard at Group will be relieved at 041800 by 51st Engr C Bn.

4 May 1945:

No change

5 May 1945:

No change

6 May 1945:

- 1530 - Instructions from Group thru Liaison Officer: Destroy or turn in all enemy ammo and weapons in battalion area. Companies in process of executing this work.

7 May 1945:

No change

Incl #1

(49)

Scout

Hq. 299th Engr C Bn.
Operations Log, May 1945, cont'd.

1 June 1945

8 May 1945:

1500 - Company commanders meeting: Issued movement order for move on morning of 11 May 45. One platoon "B" Company to remain in Ingolstadt to guard warehouses and trestway bridge.

VE DAY

Incl #1

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299TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
BATTLE HISTORY
BATTLE OF THE BULGE

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION
LOCATED AFTER FIRST PRINTING

COMPANY "C" 299TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

APO 230
29 DECEMBER 1944

SUBJECT: PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF S/SGT. ELDON W. WALKER
TO : COMMANDING OFFICER, 299TH ENGR (C) BN. APO 230

WE WERE STATIONED AT MORHET ON 20 DEC 44 WHEN I RECEIVED MY ORDERS TO TAKE ONE SQUAD OF MEN AND PROCEED TO SIBERT AND ESTABLISH A ROAD BLOCK THERE. ARRIVING THERE ABOUT 1600 AND AFTER LOOKING FOR THE BEST POSSIBLE SPOT NEAR THE TOWN WE STARTED TO CARRY OUT OUR MISSION. WE HARDLY GOT STARTED WHEN A MAJOR INTERRUPTED US AND WANTED TO KNOW WHAT WE WERE DOING. I EXPLAINED TO HIM THAT WE WERE FIXING A STRING OF MINES TO PULL ACROSS THE ROAD IN THE EVENT OF AN ENEMY TANK ATTACKING FROM THAT DIRECTION. HE STOPPED ME AND TOOK ME DOWN TO A LT. COL. WHO INFORMED ME THAT WE COULD NOT PUT A ROAD BLOCK IN HIS AREA OR IN THE VICINITY OF HIS AREA. WE THEN RETURNED TO OUR OWN CP.

AT ABOUT 0300 21 DEC 44 MY PLATOON WAS ALERTED PLUS ONE SQUAD FROM THE THIRD PLATOON. WITH LT. KOINIG IN CHARGE WE WERE TO MOVE OUT AND PROCEED TO COMPANY "B" AREA GIVE THEM SUPPORT. WE REACHED A POINT AT THE RAILROAD UNDERPASS ON N-46 BELOW MORHET WHEN WE ENCOUNTERED A CONVOY COMING TOWARD US. MACHINE GUN AND BURP GUN FIRE COULD BE HEARD FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE UNDERPASS AND FROM THE INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM THE ONCOMING TROOPS, THE ROAD JUNCTION HAD BEEN OVER RUN BY SOME GERMAN TANKS AND INFANTRY. WE WERE FORTUNATE TO HAVE ROOM ENOUGH TO TURN THE VEHICLES AROUND AND RETURNED TO OUR CP. WE REPORTED THIS EVENT TO CAPTAIN BUNTING UPON ARRIVAL AT OUR CP.

AFTER ARRIVING AT THE COMPANY "B" CP CAPT. BUNTING TOOK THE REMAINDER OF THE COMPANY TOWARDS MARTELANGE. AT FAUVILLERS OUR LEAD VEHICLE WAS FIRED ON BY PARATROOPERS. THE ACTION LED TO THE CAPTURE OF FOUR PRISONERS. WE PROCEEDED TO SEARCH THE HOUSES, HOUSE BY HOUSE, AND AFTER WORKING DOWN A HILL AROUND A CURVE WE WERE HALTED BY GERMAN SHOUTS AND FIRED UPON BY HEAVY SMALL ARMS FIRE. WE SPLIT OUR FORCES AND SENT ONE SQUAD AROUND TO THE RIGHT FLANK AND HALF A SQUAD AROUND TO THE LEFT FLANK. THIS WAS DONE IN ORDER TO GAIN HIGH GROUND AND A GOOD FIRING POSITION. THE ONLY AUTOMATIC FIRE WE HAD WAS TWO 50 CAL MACHINE GUNS AND ONE 30 CAL MACHINE GUN. ONE 50 CAL MACHINE GUN DID NOT FIRE PROPERLY. I TOOK OVER THE 30 CAL MACHINE GUN AND PROCEEDED TO FIRE IT AT A HAY STACK AND A GERMAN MACHINE GUN POSITION ON THE RIGHT FLANK. THE 50 CAL MACHINE GUN WAS TURNED ON THE HAY STACK AND THE FIREPOWER FROM BOTH GUNS SET THE HAYSTACK ON FIRE AND PUT THE MACHINE GUN IN THE HAY STACK OUT OF ACTION. LT. FRENCH WHO WAS LEADING THE POINT ALSO CLAIMED THAT I KILLED ONE OF THE GUNNERS IN THE MACHINE GUN NEST ON OUR RIGHT FLANK.

ELDON W. WALKER
S/SGT. 299TH ENGRS (C) BN.
PLATOON SGT.

COMPANY "B" 299TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

28 Dec 44
APO 230

SUBJECT: BATTLE EXPERIENCE

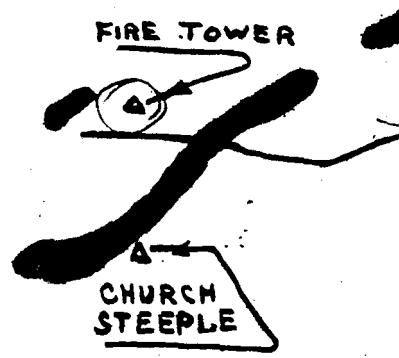
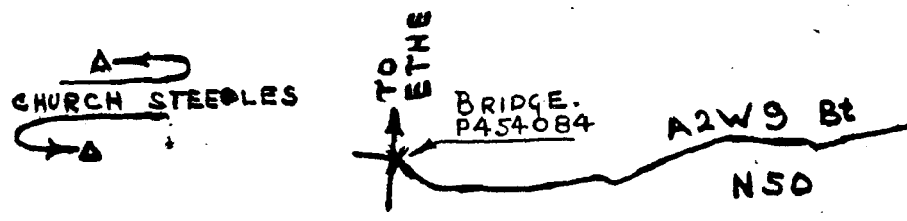
TO : COMMANDING OFFICER, 299TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

ON DECEMBER 19TH AT 2330 WE LEFT BIVOUAC TO TAKE UP A COMPANY DEFENSE AREA. COMMAND POST BEING ESTABLISHED AT WITRY, THE FIRST PLATOON MOVED MARTELANGE. I WAS ORDERED TO SET UP A POST ON A HILL OVERLOOKING MARTELANGE. I HAD ONE COMPLETE SQUAD OF MEN WITH ME. WE WERE ORDERED TO PREPARE DEMOLITION CHARGES TO FALL TREES ACROSS N-4. WE FINISHED THE NIGHT BY DIGGING OUR WEAPONS AND OURSELVES IN. OUR WEAPONS CONSISTED OF TWO BAZOOKAS AND ONE 50 CALIBER MACHINE GUN. EACH MAN WAS ARMED WITH AN M1. MY INSTRUCTIONS WERE, WHEN THE ENEMY WAS SIGHTED BY MYSELF, I WAS TO TAKE THE ACTION THAT I THOUGHT BEST. IF THE FORCES WERE NOT TOO BIG I WAS TO DELAY HIM AS LONG AS POSSIBLE. IF THE FORCE WAS TOO BIG WE WERE TO GET OUT BY TRUCK AND TELL THE NCO IN CHARGE OF THE DEMOLITION OF TWO BRIDGES. WE WORKED OUR GUARD FOUR HOURS ON AND FOUR HOURS OFF DURING THE DAY AND TWO ON AND TWO OFF DURING THE NIGHT. THE NIGHT OF THE 19TH WENT WITHOUT ANY TROUBLE. I WAS TOLD THAT A GERMAN ARMORED CAR HAD CUT N-4 BETWEEN MY POSITION AND BASTOGNE. AT ABOUT 0700 AN AMERICAN HALF TRACK CAME FROM BASTOGNE AND SAID HE HAD CHASED THE ENEMY OUT OF THAT POSITION AND THE ROAD WAS CLEAR AGAIN. AT ABOUT 0100 ON DECEMBER 20TH THE SOUND OF ARTILLERY AND SMALL ARMS FIRE COULD BE HEARD ABOUT 2 KILOMETERS TO THE WEST OF US. FIRING STOPPED AT 0530. AT 0830 THE COMPANY COMMANDER, WHILE GIVING ME INSTRUCTIONS WAS INFORMED BY A CAPTAIN IN THE TANK CORP THAT HIS ENTIRE COMPANY OF TANKS WAS KNOCKED OUT AND THAT THERE WAS ONE BRIDGE PREPARED FOR DEMOLITION AND THREE MEN BETWEEN MY POSITION AND THE GERMAN ARMOR. AT 1400 ON DECEMBER 20TH GERMAN 88S ON OUR WEST SIDE OPENED FIRE ON THE TOWN OF MARTELANGE. FIRING CONTINUED FOR APPROXIMATELY ONE AND A HALF HOURS. THE GUN FIRING WAS ABOUT 15000 YARDS FROM OUR POSITION. NCO IN CHARGE OF THE BRIDGES SENT A MESSAGE TO ME AT 1530 AND TOLD ME TO GET DOWN THERE AS HE WAS GOING TO BLOW THE BRIDGE BECAUSE THE SHELLS WERE FALLING CLOSE TO HIS BRIDGE. I SENT WORD BACK THAT I WAS NOT TO LEAVE UNTIL I HAD SEEN THE ENEMY. AT 1550 WE WERE FIRED ON BY 20MM FROM ONE GERMAN ARMORED RECON VEHICLE AND ONE MARK V TANK. OUR ROUTE OF ESCAPE WAS CUT OFF BY THE TANKS AS THEY HAD COME FROM OUR LEFT REAR. THE BRIDGES WERE BLOWN IN MARTELANGE AND FIRE FROM THE 20MMS AND MORTARS WAS SO INTENSE THAT WE WERE UNABLE TO DESTROY THE 2½ TON TRUCK. I GAVE THE ORDER TO START UP N-4 TOWARDS BASTOGNE. WE FOLLOWED N-4 FOR 1000 YARDS AND THEN WE STARTED CROSS COUNTRY. THE GERMANS FIRED 20MM AND MORTARS INTO THE WOODS WHERE WE WERE. WHEN WE HAD GONE ABOUT TWO MILES I GAVE THE ORDER TO HALT AS WE HAD COVERED THOSE MILES AT A PRETTY GOOD SPEED.

FROM THE INFORMATION I RECEIVED FROM THE MEN I COULD PLAN OUR ROUTE OF ESCAPE. I WAITED FOR THE FOG AND DARKNESS TO SET IN. I GAVE INSTRUCTIONS THAT THERE WOULD BE NO SMOKING OR NOISE THAT COULD BE HELPED. WE TRAVELED SOUTH BY WEST FOR ABOUT AN HOUR UNTIL WE REACHED A RAILROAD. WE RESTED AGAIN AND FROM OUR POSITION WE COULD SEE LIGHT OF A TOWN. WE COULD HEAR A STREAM FROM WHERE WE WERE. I GAVE THE ORDER TO MOVE DOWN NEAR THE STREAM WHERE THE NOISE OF IT WOULD KILL OUR OWN NOISE. SOME OF THE MEN COULD NOT SWIM SO WHILE THEY STAYED IN THEIR POSITION I TRIED TO FIND A PLACE TO CROSS THE STREAM. CURRENT WAS TOO SWIFT AT THAT PLACE AND AS I COULD HEAR RAPIDS FURTHER DOWN STREAM I TOOK OFF MY OUTER CLOTHING AND TOOK ONE MAN WITH ME TO TRY AND CROSS THE STREAM AT THE RAPIDS. IT WAS TOO SWIFT AT THAT POINT SO I REJOINED THE MEN AND WE MOVED ON DOWN THE STREAM GOING TOWARD THE TOWN OF MARTELANGE. WE FOUND A SEVEN TON BRIDGE AND CROSSED IT. WE MOVED ON UP THE ROAD TO A VILLAGE AND I HID THE MEN BY A CHURCH AND WENT OVER TO A BARN AND ASKED DIRECTIONS AS TO HABAY. WE MOVED OUT AND FOLLOWED A SMALL ROAD FOR ABOUT FIVE HOURS UNTIL WE WERE HALTED BY AMERICAN SOLDIERS OF AN ARMORED OUTFIT. I WAS TAKEN TO THEIR COMMAND POST AND FOUND I WAS AT THE TOWN OF ANLIER ON N-48 BETWEEN HABAY LA NEUVE AND NEUFCHATEAU. WE LEFT ON N-48 AND WALKED TO HABAY LA NEUVE WHERE THE BATTALION COMMAND POST WAS LOCATED. I WAS TOLD TO REPORT TO MAJOR PERRY AND GIVE AN ACCOUNT OF MY ACTIONS. I ALSO TOLD LT. ANDERSON THAT THERE WERE NO ROAD BLOCKS ON THE ROAD I HAD JUST COVERED.

NORMAN R BUECKER
SGT. Co "B" 299TH ENGRS.
SQUAD LEADER

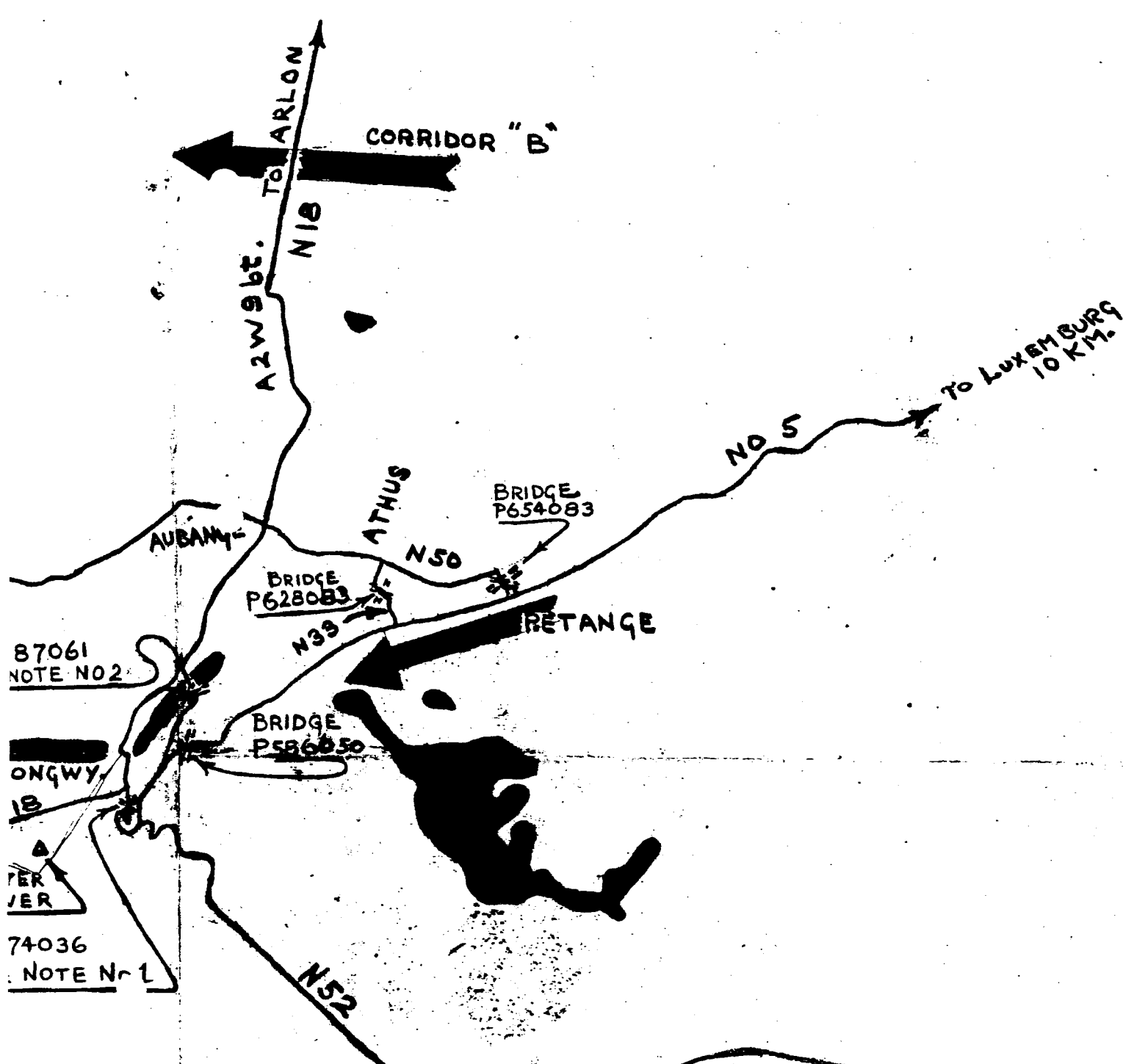
SECRET



NOTE No. 1.

LONGWY. P374036
STEEP HILL WITH 10' STONE
WALL ON WEST SIDE OF ROAD
70' STEEP GRADE ON EAST
SIDE. 37' HASTY CRATER 5'
HOLES 350* EXPLOSIVE. 50
CAL. M.G. AND ROCKET LAUNCH.

M
S
E
3
4
A
D



DRAWING FILE No: 12-10

NOTE NO. 2.
 ST MARTIN P587061
 HILL WITH BUILDINGS ALONG
 OF ROAD ON BOTH SIDES.
 ASTY CRATER. 5 HOLES
 EXPLO ME ONE SQU-
 WITH CAL. 30 M.G. FOR
 VCE.

299 ENGINEER C. BATTALION	
- INTELLIGENCE SECTION -	
SUPPLEMENT No. 1 To INTELLIGENCE ANNEX, DEFENCE OF REAR AREA	
MAP REF: 25QS 4336	1:100,000
SHEET NO. 17. BELGIUM & NE. FRANCE	

S E C R E T

HEADQUARTERS, 299TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION,

Hachy, Belgium

S E C R E T
:AUTH: CG 1st U. S. Army :
:INIT: *Bill* :
:DATE: 2 December 1944 :

INTELLIGENCE ANNEX

1. Summary of enemy situation, Enemy concentrations in vicinity of Trier.
No enemy contact at present.
2. Essential elements of information:
 1. In the event that our position is attacked by enemy forces, the following information is required:
 1. Troop strength - composition, disposition, location of flanks, movement and speed.
 2. His support element, and support fire.
 3. The attitude of his forces.
 3. Reconnaissance and observation mission.
 1. Observation post to be occupied as indicated on Incl #2.
 2. Active reconnaissance will be conducted by all elements to determine identification, strength, composition and armament of enemy.
4. a. Examination of prisoners by elements of the Battalion will be limited to identification and matters of enemy tactics important to the elements concerned. Prisoners will be sent promptly under guard to Battalion C. P. with an informal report of any examination.
 - b. Documents and captured material:
 1. A systematic search will be made of all captured personnel. Material found, of a documentary nature, will be forwarded to S-2 this headquarters.
 2. Equipment or material captured, the existence of which was previously unknown to the capturing unit, will be placed under guard and will be reported to S-2 immediately. Unit commanders will cause to be searched for documents, all captured vehicles, tanks and crashed planes.
5. Maps: Each Company Commander will have in his possession one set of tactical maps (Arlon sheet 17 and Verdun sheet 21, 1:100,000 GSCS 4336).
6. The characteristics of the terrain in this area give us the maximum advantage in the case of cover and concealment. Strict camouflage discipline will be enforced by all units or detachment commanders.

When capture is eminent, secret or confidential documents, maps, orders, etc. will be destroyed. Individuals captured will give only name, rank and serial number. Individuals will be searched prior to any engagement for letters, pictures, documents, and any items which might disclose information to the enemy. The enemy will undoubtedly take advantage of the use of leaflets as a means

-1-
S E C R E T

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NND
Authority 235017
By SB NARA Date

S E C R E T

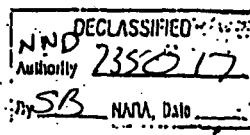
of propaganda. In his leaflets, the point of disorganization in rear areas will be stressed. Personnel will not circulate such information, but will destroy them immediately.

7. Reports

a. Spot reports on information observed will be forwarded to Battalion S-2 with a statement showing source, time observed, by what unit and where the observation was made:

- (1) Reports will be sent by the fastest means available. Vital information will be sent by at least two different means.
- (2) Information of the enemy - reports sent to Battalion Headquarters will contain as much of the following information as is available, at the time of the report.
 - (a) Troop strength - Composition, disposition, location of flanks, movement and speed.
 - (b) Columns - Composition, length, estimated number of vehicles, rate of march, origin and final destination.
 - (c) The attitude of ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~main~~ ^{main} force and detachments, whether they are aggressive, the offensive, delaying or retreating.
 - (d) Enemy identification will be reported, and will include the source, location, time and designation of unit making the capture. Hostile insignia and facings will be transmitted with a written report.
 - (e) Defensive works, obstacles, demolitions, land mines and similar work will always be described by giving their location, type, extent, and progress of work.
 - (f) Chemical agents - Kind, method of projection and area covered.
 - (g) Aircraft - Type, location, direction of movements, number and altitude.
 - (h) Tanks - Type, location, direction of movement and number.
- (3) Units will maintain continuous observation of subjects reported upon and report material changes in speed, disposition, direction, or other activities to Battalion S-2 and to adjacent units directly concerned as situation dictates. When information of the enemy is lacking, daily reports must be made, giving location of reporting agency.

S E C R E T



S E C R E T

HEADQUARTERS, 299TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION,
Hachy, Belgium

S E C R E T
AUTH: CG 1st U. S. Army
INIT: <i>[initials]</i>
DATE: 2 December 1944

ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION

1. Summary of the enemy situation.

- a. Enemy active in forward area in vicinity Trier.
- b. No movements or concentrations observed.
- c. Weather conditions at present will restrict cross-country movement.
- d. On forces (listed below)

NAME & DESIGNATION	LOCATION	C. O.	STRENGTH	BASIC ARM
306 Ord M Co (Det)AA 1st ECA Regt. Hq. Co. D, APO 658	P 594230	Lt. F.T. Walton	41	Carbine
518 MP, Co A	P 563388	A. J. Gioio, Capt.	28	Carbine
518 MP, Co A	P 460216	Lt. McPeak	2	Rifle
518 MP, Co A	P 398228	" "	3	"
518 MP, Co A	P 595227	" "	3	"
341 Engr. Co A (2 pl.)	P 404099	Lt. Jacobson	81	" (Expected to leave area in near future)

2. Conclusions.

a. Enemy capabilities:

The enemy can stage an attack, after his break through of front line tactical troops, through corridors A, B and C or a frontal assault on Arlon.

High ground in his possession east of Arlon will consist of the following:

- (1) Hill 300 (vic. Beckerich) (P 6728)
- (2) Hill 400 (vic. Heckbous) (P 6625)
- (3) Hill 400 (vic. Turpange) (P 6214)

Conditions of terrain east of Arlon will confine his approaches to existing roads. He can envelop our position by attacking from south.

Stage an airborne attack on rear area.

b. Our capabilities:

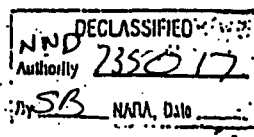
If he adopts corridor "A", it can be sealed by controlling high ground around Arlon and Nobressart.

Corridors "A" and "B" converge and pass through Hachy. Therefore, they must be systematically blocked by controlling existing routes.

If striking force is large, our forces can control approach routes and stage a delaying action.

If striking force is small, our forces can use high ground outlined in Incl. 2 and destroy him.

S E C R E T



S E C R E T

HEADQUARTERS, 299TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION,

Hachy, Belgium

S E C R E T
: AUTH: CG 1st U. S. Army :
: INIT: <u>MLW</u> :
: DATE: 2 December 1944 :

TACTICAL STUDY OF THE TERRAIN

1. Purpose and other limiting considerations: The area bounded by Martelange (P 5639) - Arlon (P 6122) - Longwy (P 5704) - Stenay (P 1502) - Rulles (P 4326) Fauvilles (P 5141) Martelange shown on overlay (incl #2) is to be considered herein for defense against a possible break through of front line positions or the enemy's use of airborne troops.

2. General Topography of Area.

A. Drainage System

1. Principle Streams

a. La Semois River - draining area from southeast to northwest.

- (1) Type of river - meandering
- (2) Tributary of Meuse River.
- (3) Channel of flood stage - valley with constrictions at each road that crosses valley. Valley partially flooded.
- (4) All bridges along stream (vic. Etalle) are out or unsafe for military traffic.
- (5) Valley varies from one-half to one mile wide.
- (6) Roads cross perpendicular to valley on 5' to 10' fills with open bridges sites of 70° - 80°.
 - (a) Location of each crossing:
 1. P 463217
 2. P 460219
 3. P 451219
 4. P 434230
 5. P 431243
 6. P 398230
 7. P 383244
 - (7) Normal depth of water - 2' to 3'.
 - (8) Depth at present - 6'.
 - (9) Velocity varies 1' to 5'/sec.
 - (10) Ford at Etalle P 460219.
 - (a) Depth of water - 3'6".
 - (b) Vel. 4'/sec.
 - (c) Footbridge at site.

b. Basse Vire River in southern section of area, draining from east to west.

- (1) Width - 30'
- (2) Depth - 2' to 3'
- (3) Velocity - 1 1/2'/sec.

c. Sure River - flowing east to west.

- (1) Width - 48'
- (2) Depth - 3'
- (3) Vel. 5'/sec.

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By <u>SB</u> NADA, Date _____

S E C R E T

B. Ridge System (See Incl #2)

1. Ridge line south of Basse Vire River running east - west through Tellancourt (P 4703) which commands the terrain to the south. Relative elevation of 400 - 500 M.
2. System of high grounds circling city of Arlon (P 6122) offering a formidable barrier (if manned) to a frontal assault in this area. Relative elevation - 400 - 500 M.
3. Ridge line running from Habay-la-Neuve (P 4927) generally northeast and then continuing to east. Relative elevation of 400 - 500 M. Overlooking Habay-la-Neuve from the north, there is a heavily wooded area of young pine. This ridge commands corridor "A" (Incl #2).

C. Routes:

Main routes of communication in this area:

NO.	CLASSIFICATION	CONDITION
N 44	B 2 w 9 bt	fair
N 48	B 2 w 9 bt	good
N 4	A 2 w 9 bt	fair
N 18	B 2 w 9 bt	poor
N 381	B 2 w 9 bt	good
Rt 9	B 1 1/2 w 15 bt	good
N 50	B 2 w 9 bt	good

D. General nature of terrain - rolling.

3. Military aspects of the terrain.

A. Avenues of approach.

1. N 22 & N 24 fr east to Arlon
2. N 44 fr east to Arlon
3. N 4 fr east to Arlon
4. N 18 fr south
5. N 4 fr north
6. N 47 fr south to Montmedy
N 381 to east then Rt 9 fr Virton to Habay.
7. Also corridors "A" & "B".

B. Obstacles.

1. Natural - marsh land 2 km north of Vance and northeast of Etalle.
2. Artifical - (see Incl #2).

C. Concealment and cover.

1. Wooded areas east of Arlon (vic. Beckerich).
2. Wooded areas north of Habay-la-Neuve.
3. Wooded areas south of Etalle.

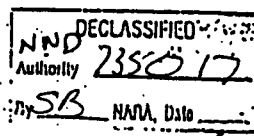
4. Critical Terrain Features.

1. High ground surrounding Arlon.
2. High ground south of Basse Vire River.

5. Tactical Effect of the Terrain.

- A. Enemy may make his approach through corridor "A" by use of foot troops or mechanized troops.

S E C R E T

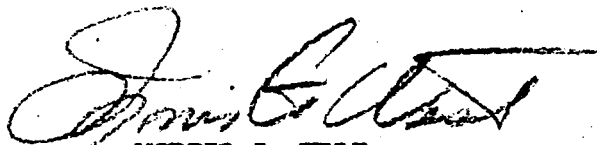


- B. Approaches through corridor "B" by enemy will be limited to foot troops because of marshy areas.
- C. Approach from south through Montmedy.

Own Forces:

- A. Corridor "A" - deny enemy's use of road net through corridor (see Incl. #2).
- B. Hold high ground around Arlon.
- C. Deny enemy use of N 47 (see Incl #2). Occupy fort at Montmedy (some French army now occupying).

Comments: Ground surrounding bivouac area at Hachy is gently rolling terrain (see Incl. #1). No defense positions found in immediate vicinity of bivouac area except systematic road blocks to deprive enemy use of existing routes.



MORRIS G. WEST
Captain, Corps of Engineers
S-2

S E C

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Authority	235017
By SB	NANA, Dslb

S E C R E T

HEADQUARTERS, 299TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION,
Nachy, Belgium

SECRET
: AUTH: CG First U. S. Army :
: INIT: *7/10/44* :
: DATE: 7 December 1944 :

Supplement to Intelligence Annex, Defense of Area

ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION

1. Summary of the enemy situation.

- a. No change
- b. No change
- c. No change
- d. Own forces (listed below):

<u>NAME & DESIGNATION</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>G. O.</u>	<u>STRENGTH</u>	<u>BASIC ARM</u>
306 Ord M Co (Det) AA	P 594230	Lt. F.T. Walton	41	Carbine
1st ECA Regt. Hq. Co. D, APO 658	P 563388	Capt. A. J. Gioio	26	Carbine
518 MP, Co. A	P 460216	Lt. McPeak	2	Rifle
518 MP, Co A	P 398228	Lt. McPeak	3	"
518 MP, Co A	P 595227	Lt. McPeak	3	"
341 Engr, Co A (2 pl.) (Expected to leave area in near future).	P 404099	Lt. Jacobson	81	"
305 Sig Opr Bn.	P 604097	Lt. Burke	15	Carbine
3112 Sig Ser Bn. Det. 2	P 604097	Lt. Bryndle	23	Carbine

2. No change.

MORRIS G. NES T
Captain, Corps of Engineers
S-2

S E C R E T

DECLASSIFIED
Authority *235017*
By *SB* NARA, Date _____

SECRET : SECRET
: Auth: CG, 1st U.S. Army :
: Initial *WJ* :
: Date: 8 December, 1944 :

HEADQUARTERS, 299TH ENGINEER
APO 230

AREA DEFENSE PLAN
CHANGE I

Par. 4b(1)(a) will be changed to read:

* * * * *

Request aid men through S-1

* * * * *

By order of Lt. Col. JEWETT:

Charles J. Lamb
CHARLES J. LAMB
Capt., Corps of Engineers

DECLASSIFIED
NND Authority 235017
By SB NARA, Date

S E C R E T

HEADQUARTERS, 299TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION,
APO 230

SECRET
AUTH: CG 1st US Army
INIT:
DATE: 11 December 1944

SUBJECT: Sub-area Defense Plan

TO : All units, Sub-area 1A.

Change II to Sub-area Defense Plan.

1. Par. 3 a 1s changed to read "Co "A" 299th Engineer Combat Bn. is designated as Area Reserve. The Commanding Officer, Co "A", 299th Engineer Combat Bn. is designated as Reserve Commander. In the event of an alert he will place himself and his unit at the disposal of the Area Commander.

2. Add par. 3 h. Hq. & Serv. Co. 299th Engineer Combat Bn. will perform its staff and service duties. The Company Commander of Hq. & Serv. Co. will assemble any personnel not needed for necessary staff and service functions. He will place himself and these surplus personnel under the disposition of the Commanding Officer of Company "C", 299th Engineer Combat Bn. who will utilize them in the defense of the bivouac area.

By order of Lt. Col. JEWETT:

EDWIN R. PERRY
Major, Corps of Engineers

S E C R E T

NND	DECLASSIFIED
Authority	235017
By SB	NANA, Date

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HEADQUARTERS, 299TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION,
APO 230

SECRET
MAY 21 08 1st 1st Army
1954
CLASS: 14 December 1964

SUBJECT: Security of Base Areas

TO : ALL Base Commanders, Sub Area 1A

1. Action taken by unit commanders upon the receipt of warnings will in general follow the sequence of phases listed below:

a. Phase Ia - Upon receipt of the initial warning, all units will be alerted and observers will be dispatched to predetermined positions that offer a commanding view of the terrain.

b. Phase II - Upon receipt of a warning of imminent attack, efforts will be concerted (except that unit CP's may remain in a building) and bivouac areas and vital installations will be prepared for defense, and troops will prepare to establish and defend road blocks.

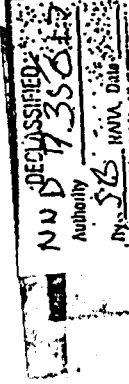
c. Phase III - Actual contact with the enemy, at which time road blocks will be established and other detailed defense will be executed.

2. Notify this Headquarters upon completion of Phases I or II. Any contact with the enemy will be reported as stated in par. 2; Intelligence Areas to Area Flak.

By order of Lt. Col. JIMMY

ROYAL L. FRANK
Major, Corps of Engineers

SECRET



SCHEMA DE RESEAUX DU SUR DE BELGIQUE DU LUXEMBOURG ET DE L'EST FRANCAIS.

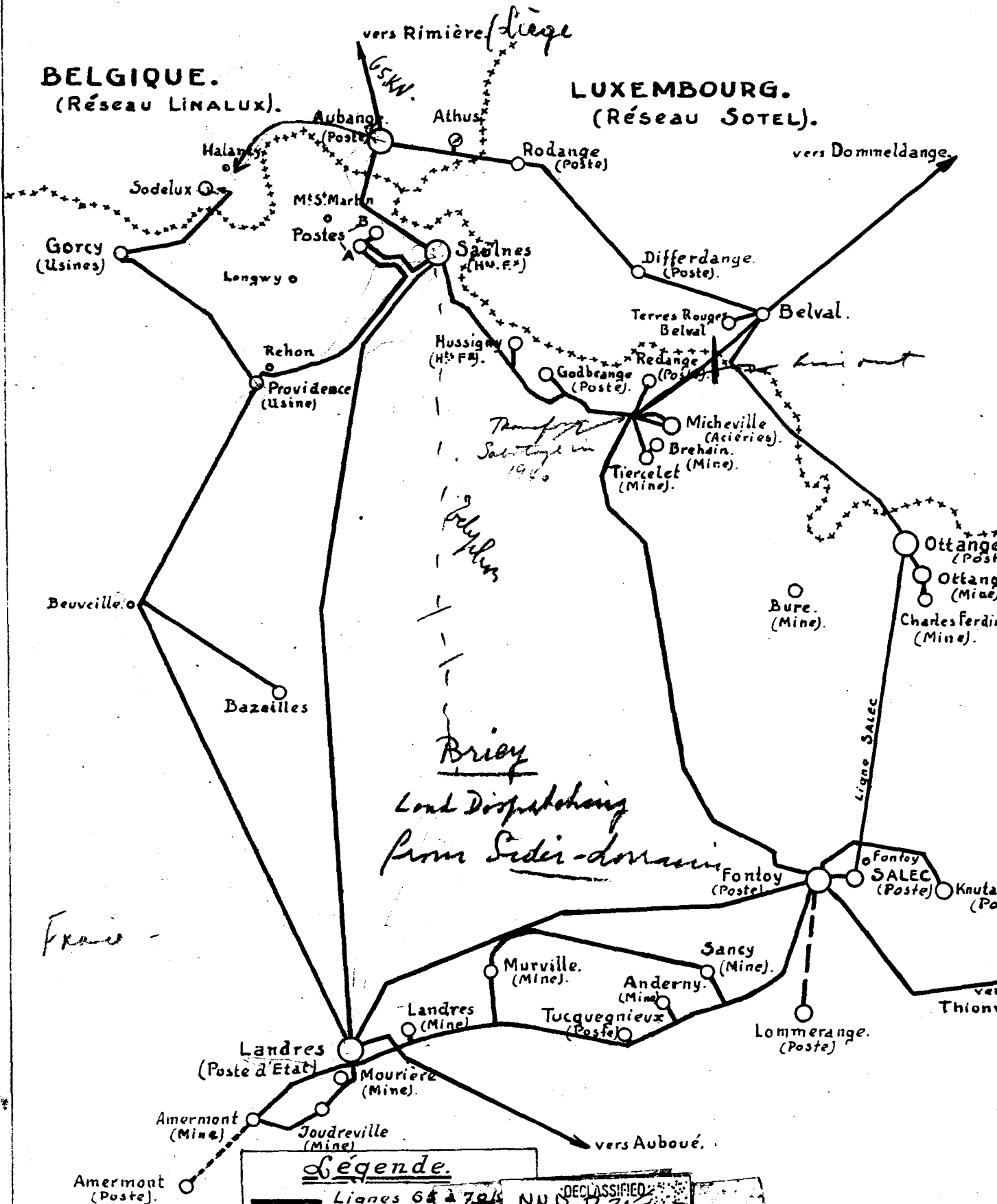
Echelle : 1 à 160.000.

BELGIQUE.

(Réseau LINALUX).

LUXEMBOURG.

(Réseau SOTEL).



Légende.

Lignes 6 à 2700

" 30, KV.

UNDECLASSIFIED
 Authority
 Date
 HVA, Date

France

*L'ont Dispatching
pour Sider-dominion*

Briey

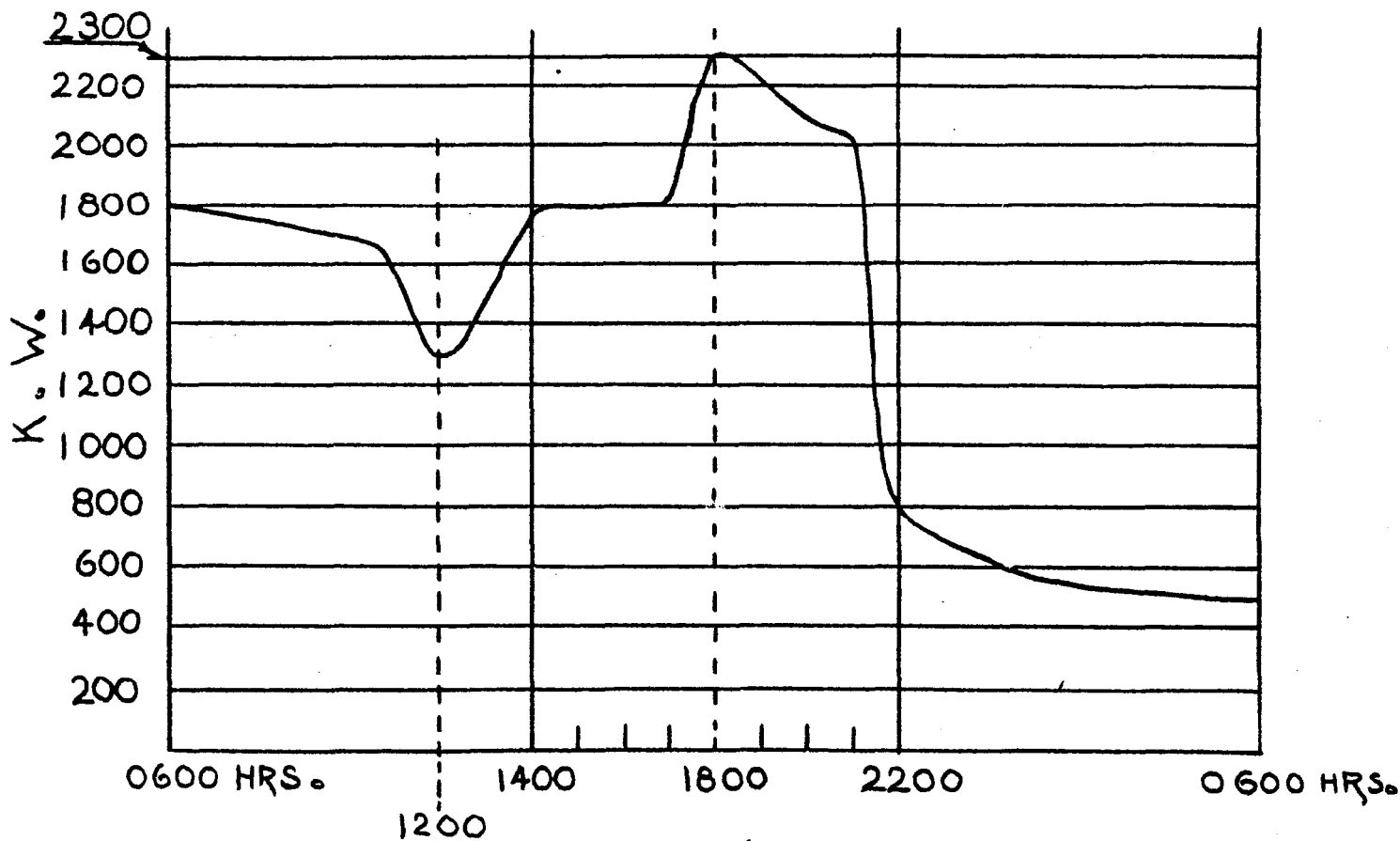
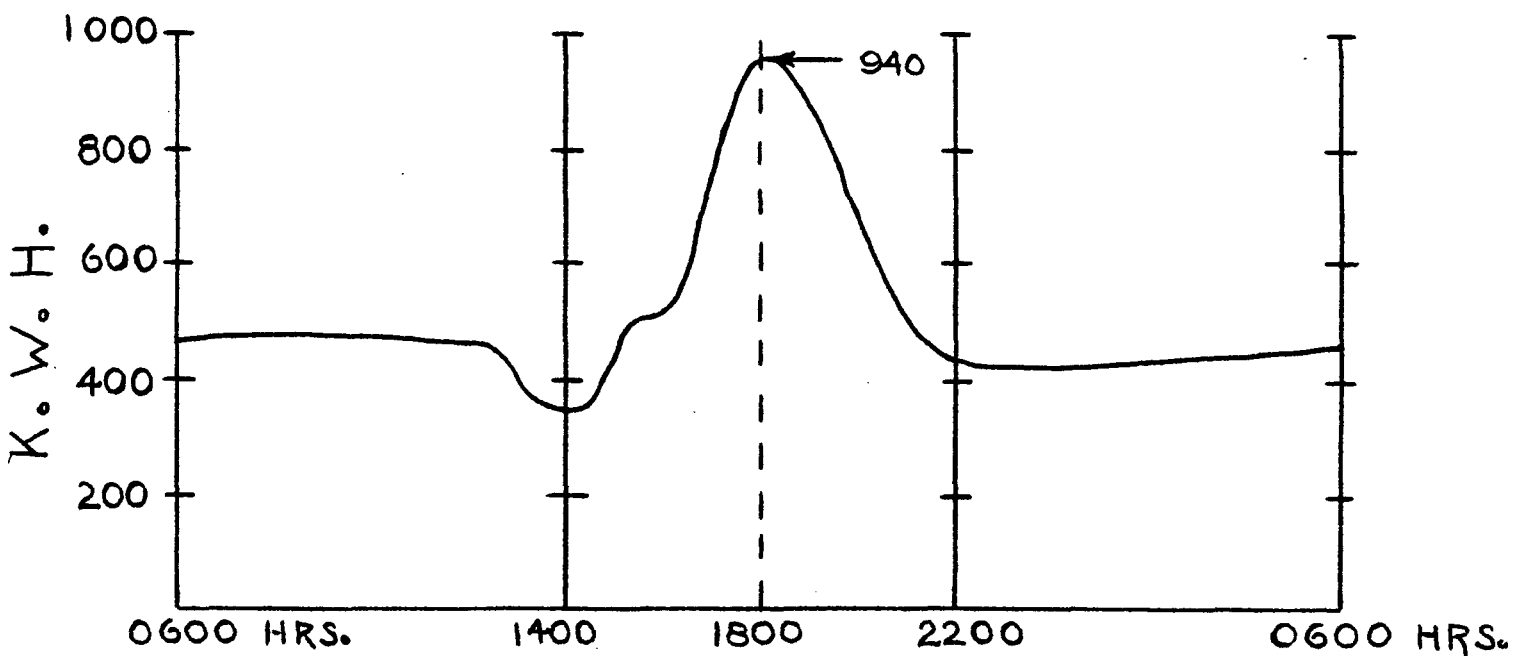
vers Dommeldange.

vers Rimière (Liège)

vers Luxembourg

vers Auboué.

(INCL 3)



POWER FROM FRANCE. SIDERURGIE
LORRAINE TO SODELUX.

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AUTHORITY
DATE