

HEADQUARTERS  
208TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION  
APO 230

JOURNAL

27 September 1944

At 0600 hours, Lt. Colonel Scott received orders from Colonel Moss, Commanding Officer, 1105th Engineer Combat Group, to report to Colonel Miller XIX Corps Engineer for instructions relative to a special task force assignment. The battalion was relieved of all duties under the 1105th Engineer Combat Group. Lt. Colonel Scott reported to Colonel Miller in Maastricht at approximately 0930 hours and was informed that the battalion was attached to the 1115th Engineer Combat Group. The battalion was assigned tentatively by Colonel Shuler, Commanding Officer, 1115th Engineer Combat Group, in support of the 7th Armored Division on a special task force mission to secure the right flank of the 2nd British Army and establish a bridge head at Roermond. Lt. Colonel Scott informed Colonel Miller and Colonel Shuler that he could have his unit moved to vicinity of Maastricht before 1900 hours. Bivouac area was picked and guides posted by the 1115th Engineer Combat Group. Lt. Colonel Scott reported back to his unit at approximately 1230 hours and reported to Colonel Moss the instructions he had received. Colonel Moss would not release the battalion until he had confirmed orders from First Army Headquarters. In the meantime the battalion was ready to move at 1500 hours. Orders releasing the battalion were received from Commanding Officer, 1105th Engineer Combat Group at 1750 hours. At 1415 hours, Lt. Cox, the Adjutant, Lt. Fraley, the Reconnaissance Officer, with a billeting party left Battalion Headquarters with instructions to report to Captain Durham, Liaison Officer, 1115th Engineer Combat Group at XIX Corps Headquarters. Upon arrival at Corps Headquarters, Lt. Cox reported to the 1115th Engineer Combat Group Executive Officer, Lt. Colonel Sauernman, giving him this message from the Battalion Commanding Officer, "That battalion would move at 1500 hours if released and would be at Junction N43 and N1 at 1700 hours". Captain Durham proceeded to Junction N43 and N1 to await arrival of battalion. Lt. Cox and the billeting party proceeded to bivouac area to lay out company areas. Areas were laid out, Lt. Cox posted guides along the route and arrived at Junction N43 and N1 at approximately 2030 hours at which time battalion had still not arrived. XIX Headquarters received instructions from First Army Headquarters that battalion had not been released by 1105th Engineer Combat Group and would not move until the next morning. Guides were picked up and rations for 30 men were furnished by XIX Corps and the billeting party proceeded to bivouac area for the night. At about 2200 hours, Lt. Colonel Scott reported to XIX Corps Headquarters that battalion was coming behind and would wait at Junction for routing to bivouac area. The battalion had not received instructions to wait until the next morning to move. It was raining considerably and the battalion remained on the road the remainder of the night and planned to move to the bivouac area at day-break. Medical Detachment drew Medical supplies through S - 4.

28 September 1944

Arrived in bivouac area in vicinity of Mechelen at 0700 hours. Lt. Colonel Sauernman, 1115th Engineer Combat Group Executive Officer, conferred with Lt. Colonel Scott in the area at 0900 hours. Lt. Colonel Scott accompanied Lt. Colonel Sauernman to the 82nd Engineer Combat Battalion and the 33rd Armored Engineer Combat Battalion to discuss plans. Lt. Colonel Scott was informed that this battalion would be in reserve for the 7th Armored Division. Lt. Colonel Scott and Captain Weinberger, Liaison Officer, reported to the XIX Corps Headquarters for instructions and were informed that due to the fact that the battalion was expected a day late, another battalion was assigned to the mission with the 7th Armored Division. Subsequently the

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battalion was assigned the mission to support a task force composed of a Belgium Brigade under the command of Colonel Perone and supported by a Tank Destroyer Group under the command of Colonel Elms with attachment of one light and one medium tank company. The 990th Engineer Treadway Bridge Company, and the 512th Engineer Bailey Bridge Company less one Bailey Bridge Platoon was attached to this battalion. Lt. Colonel Scott and Major Michael accompanied Colonel Shuler to the 82nd Engineer Combat Battalion to discuss plans and was informed to see Colonel Elms at Kinroy. Discussed the mission of the task force with Colonel Elms at Kinroy, the mission was to push north on the western side of the Meuse River, crossing the Wasson Canal and meeting the 7th Armored Division north and west of Roermond.

Major Braden, 1115th Engineer Combat Group Surgeon, visited the battalion to give instructions to the battalion Surgeon.

Battalion celebrated its second anniversary of activation.

29 September 1944

The Battalion S-4 conferred with 1115th Engineer Combat Group S-4. Battalion received QM supplies Class I & IV. Battalion received QM Supplies Class III for 1115th Group and distributed them according to group Instructions. Requisition was prepared for QM Class II Clothing short on previous salvage. Ordnance Class V supplies received and distributed. Engineer Class IV supplies received and distributed. Request for shoe repair sent to companies. Companies were ordered to send requisition for winter clothing to Battalion S-4. Lt. Cox and Master Sergeant Walters conferred with 1115th Engineer Combat Group Adjutant.

Fifteen men were treated by the Dentist. Eight false teeth plates were sent in for repair. 1115th Group Dentist instructed the Battalion Dentist on information for reports etc. Battalion Ambulance was sent to Hospital at Maastricht with civilians. A Belgium boy was treated at the Battalion Aid Station. He was hit by a 4 ton driver or H&S Company.

At 0800 hours, the Commanding Officer and S-4 went to Task Force Headquarters at Kinroy with Captain Hill, Liaison Officer. The Liaison Officer remained there. The Reconnaissance Officer and party with security of one squad reported to Task Force Headquarters and remained. The Third Platoon of Company "C" trained for two hours on construction of foot bridge. The Commanding Officer had a meeting of all officers in the battalion to explain the battalion's mission. The adjutant and Personnel Officer went to Army Headquarters to make arrangements for pay of the troops and to pick up hospital returnees. The commanding Officer conferred again with Colonel Elms at Kinroy at 1830 hours and with Colonel Miller at XIX Corps Headquarters at 2100 hours to report the situation and plans.

30 September 1944.

The Battalion S-4 went to Army for approval on a requisition for winter clothing, salvage and QM supplies that have been short for one month. Shoes were sent to QM for repair. Empty gas cans were returned for credit. Unit received Class "C" Rations. Made a requisition for Engineer and Signal supplies. One water point was established for Battalion's use. Corps ordered one water point established which was complied with.

Lt. Colonel Scott visited Task Force Headquarters at 0900 hours and discussed the proposed plan of attack. Plan was to attack at 1500 hours with the mission to secure south approach to Wasson Canal. Engineer reconnaissance was to accompany infantry to report on approach roads, assault areas, Canal and Lock. Major Evans of 1115th Engineer Combat Group visited the battalion in the morning to determine the situation. Captain Baral, S-2, accompanied Major Evans to Brigade Headquarters to find Captain Hill and

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By: J.M. HUDA, DMB, 1289

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learn the situation. At Brigade Headquarters they learned the attack was scheduled for 1500 hours. Two reconnaissance Parties joined the Forward element of the Task Force. At 1500 hours the 512th Engineer Light Ponton Company, Company "C" and the Forward Echelon of H&S Company and Medical Detachment began to move by infiltration to assembly area in vicinity of Kinroy, Belgium. Movement was completed at 1630 hours. The Forward CP was established at K-578847. Four EM hospital returnees were picked up at Third Replacement Depot and returned to Battalion.

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**S E C R E T**

**SECRET**

**AUTH: CG NINTH US ARMY**

**HEADQUARTERS**

**INIT:**

**208TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION**

**DATE: 6 Dec 1944**

**APQ 339**

**JOURNAL**

1 November 1944

Sgt Klein went to Heerlen and Maastricht to obtain plans of demolished bridge on site of bridge being built by Company "C" at Ammunition Dump # 910. There appeared to be an obstruction on the bed of the stream or Geleen Creek. This plan showed that there was a concrete slab through the entire width of the stream which was 20 inches thick and fifty feet long. This was a part of the original arch bridge which formed a culvert. It was decided that a crib bent would be constructed where originally a pile bent was planned.

A cemetery road at K-705664 near Sittard, Holland was surveyed by the battalion. The job was assigned to Company "B".

Company "A" completed a by-pass at Canne (Job # 28). Company "C" completed a parking lot at ASP # 910 in the vicinity of Nuth, Holland. The Bn CO inspected Company "C" bridge job at Ammunition Dump # 910. Company "B" road maintenance of shoulders on N 43 between Vise and Heer. He also inspected the cemetery road location near Sittard and the completed by-pass at Canne.

2 November 1944

Lt. Colonel Scott inspected work on ASP 910 bridge across Geleen Creek and instructed the Company Commander to construct a crib bent in place of an obstacle. He also inspected the bridge repair job on highway N 43 just north of Vise, and also inspected shoulder maintenance work on N 43. Talked with the Group CO at Group Headquarters regarding Geleen Creek bridge job.

The Medical detachment evacuated one man to the hospital with a dislocated old fracture of the right wrist.

The S-2 section sent Tec 5 Dankleman to Company "C" to take pictures of work assignments. Normal reconnaissance was done today. S/Sgt Harned reported the location of a washed gravel pit at Ormond, but after using some of this it was found unsatisfactory for the type of work we were doing at the time.

3 November 1944

Two men and an ambulance from the 564th Ambulance Company, attached to the Medical Detachment for rations, quarters and administration.

At 0830, S Sgt Harned and S Sgt Tremaine were sent out to look for bolts and a cement mixer, to be used on current operations. Photographs were taken of Company "C" bridge today.

Lt. Colonel Scott talked with Captain Schaeffer, CO, Co. "A" and informed him that he would be relieved of his command and reassigned as Assistant Division Engineer.

The battalion received orders to discontinue cemetery road job near Sittard due to proximity of front line. Work caused too much activity which might have drawn enemy fire.

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4 November 1944.

The battalion commander visited Company "C" bridge at 1100 hours. He discussed the bridge assignment with all officers and NCO's of the company and brought out all deficiencies. The deficiencies involved better organization of working parties, better supervision of working parties, more thought and consideration given to planning of work and ~~falling~~ tasks in order to keep a number of operations going at one time, discussion on construction methods in order to save time and do a better job. He returned to battalion headquarters at 2100.

5 November 1944.

The S-2 sent one reconnaissance party in search of water points. At 1000 hours, the battalion was assigned a job of making pipeline survey in North Maastricht. Lt Pascoe and M Sgt Hegy accomplished this at 2100 hours.

Lt. Colonel Scott visited Company "C" to inspect work at ASP and Company "B" road maintenance work.

6 November 1944.

Lt. Colonel Scott visited and inspected Company "B". He talked with Capt. Scovill, the CO, and all of the company officers present. Talked personally with Privates Stumbaugh and Wolfe, recently reduced NCO's. He also talked with two other EM regarding supply discipline.

Further survey was made of the demolished bridge in North Maastricht, by Lt. Pascoe and M Sgt Hegy, completing the job at 2200.

The medical detachment evacuated two men to the 41st Evacuation Hospital. One had ear trouble and one for reoccurrence of an old ankle injury.

Road reconnaissance was made by two reconnaissance parties. Photographs were taken of possible pipe laying operating. Captain Baral went to the Engineer Depot in Maastricht to secure maps.

7 November 1944.

Two reconnaissance parties were sent out. One was on normal road reconnaissance, the other to Maastricht to look for saw mills. In the afternoon, Lt. Moore and S Sgt Harned went to Tongers to check on sawmills there.

Capt. Baral went to Company "B" to investigate courts-martial charges against EM.

Lt. Colonel Scott contacted Company "A" and after inspecting the area and recommended that it be changed because of mud. He also talked with the new commanding officer, Capt. Hill.

Company "A" was assigned the mission of locating sawmills in their assigned area, place them under contract and begin the hauling of timber to the mills immediately, milling them to specified sizes, and hauling it to the Army Engineer Depot # 4.

Company was also assigned the mission of road and hard standing construction at Class III Dump at K-578420.

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8 November 1944.

Lt. Colonel Scott discussed present status of lumber assignment in a conference with the Executive Officer, S-3 and S-4. He visited Company "C" and work being done at the ammunition dump.

At 0800 hours, Lt. Moore went to Lixne to try to find a civilian who would show him the location of available standing timber in that area. He returned at 1200 hours with a negative report. Photographs were taken of Company "B" bridge assignment near Vise.

The battalion was assigned the mission of building a PWE at K-715540.

9 November 1944.

The medical detachment evacuated one man to the 105th Evacuation Hospital with Gonorrhoea (new). Captain Couture reported this case as the first of the month.

Capt. Baral went to group headquarters to see Major McWilliams to report that the bridge at Bassenge had been incorrectly marked a Class 40 when it should have been a Class 15.

Operation of sawmills by the battalion was begun.

Lt. Col Scott inspected the bridge at Bassenge and discovered that the battalion reconnaissance was unsatisfactory and that the bridge strength was incorrectly figured. A class was held with all the personnel of the Recon Section to prevent any future errors. Inspected work at Class III Dump.

10 November 1944

Battalion Headquarters and H&S Co. moved from K-5445,  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile South of Eben Emael, Belgium to K-4741, Boris, Belgium. This was accomplished due to very rainy weather and muddy bivouac area, which was liable to affect the health of the troops. Billets were obtained at the new location.

Company "C" assigned construction of PWE at K-722542.

The CO inspected the Class III railhead Depot.

11 November 1944

Company "C" completed the PWE at 1800 hours. Lt. Col. Scott inspected all sawmills in operation and with Lt. Fraley contacted the civil affairs in Leige regarding the periodic shutdowns of power. The shutdowns were caused by some breakdowns and an effort to save power. They were informed that power would be furnished continually barring the breakdowns. The Bn CO inspected the Class III railhead dump and Co. "E" in Heer.

The Medical Detachment evacuated one man to the hospital with a torn ligament of the left knee.

Journal, Hq 208th E C Bn.

12 November 1944

Two reconnaissance parties sent out at 0830 hours. One looked for timber, the other for gravel pits.

Operations orders were received, assigning a new area and reconnaissance assignment for it. The medical detachment evacuated one man to the 105th Evacuation Hospital with Gonorrhoea, (new). Company "C" began work on Railroad crossing at K-766496 for a railhead.

Lt. Col. Scott inspected the Class III railhead Dump job. He instructed the Company CO to prepare a drain from the low or center position of the hard standing running south under the tracks to a low field.

13 November 1944

The battalion received a new area of responsibility effective at 2000. Company "C" completed the Railroad Crossing task at 1800 hours this date. One R-4 Dozer, 4 hours, Aircompressor-4 hours, 20 dump truck hours, 234 man-hours were used.

The battalion commander inspected the railhead-railroad crossing (Army Job #81) and advised the O in charge that the hardstanding be tested. It was found that the water level was 6" below the surface and recommendation was made that the standing be stabilized before using it. The battalion commander discussed the Class III Railhead job with the Group CO, and requested additional trucks and a rock crusher. Arrangements were made to pick up the crusher at the Army Engr Dump the following morning. Fifteen additional trucks were also arranged for with the Army Engineer to be met at Canne the following morning. Trucks were to be available for two days.

14 November 1944.

Company "C" working on Army Job No. 21, road improvement at Ammunition Dump #910; indefinite maintenance; 1 platoon, continuous operation. Company "C" is constructing an Engineer Class III railhead. Company "A" is securing lumber for Engineer Dump No. 4.

A 25 cubic yd. portable rock crusher was picked up at the Army Engineer Dump. It was set up in an excellent quarry near Bombaye, Belgium. Company "C" was assigned the mission of operating it. One platoon of that company was moved to the site of the crusher. The battalion commander visited the Quarry site and instructed the platoon commander, Lt. Anderson, in how the crusher was to be set up. The Bn CO also visited the Class III railhead job.

15 November 1944.

Lt. Fraley, S Sgt Tremaine and S Sgt Harned started at 0900 hours to

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get data on sawmills, returning at 1400 hours, at which time two reconnaissance parties started out to complete this job.

Army Job # 85 was assigned to Company "C"--reinforcing Bridge at K-7546.

Assigned to Co. "A" the mission of hauling 40 logs to the 172d Engr C Bn sawmills. The battalion commander visited the Class III railhead job, the quarry in operation and road maintenance on N 43.

16 November 1944

H&S Co. and Battalion Headquarters moved to Gulpen, Holland (K-7048) from Boirs, Belgiu. Did work on converting a Monestary to a Hospital at K-7346, and had two platoons working on road maintenance on MSR through Aachen, Germany. (One of the platoons from Company "A" and one from Co. "C".)

The battalion Commander inspected the Class III railhead and the sawmills in operation. The battalion was assigned the task of reinforcing the bridge at the Monastery for convelesant hospital.

17 November 1944

The companies continued work on previous assignments. S Sgt Harned and a reconnaissance party carried out reconnaissance for gravel pits.

The Medical Detachment evacuated one man to the 41st Evacuation Hospital with an old head injury.

The battalion commander inspected the hardstanding at the Monastery job. He also inspected road work through Aachen, Germany.

18 November 1944

One man was evacuated to the 41st Evacuation Hospital with an old head and Upper Resperatory Infection.

The battalion commander inspected the Class III railhead job and the Monastery hard standing job.

19 November 1944

The companies continued work on previous assignments.

The battalion commander inspected with the executive officer all sawmills and loading of logs in the area. The construction of roads at the bridge school in Eysden was assigned to Company "B". Major Senn went to inspect the road. Army Job 98, QM Dp road maintenance was assigned to Company "A".

20 November 1944

The battalion commander inspected the Monastery Job which was completed at 1200 hours. 606 manhours, 1000 LF woodstrips, 378 LF blackout paper, 675 yards of rock and gravel were used. Inspected road maintenance through Aachen.

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21 November 1944

A mechanic was sent to the Monestary job at K-7346 to repair a water pump. Two reconnaissance parties did work on sawmill reconnaissance. The companies continued to do the same work as previously assigned.

The battalion commander inspected road maintenance in Aachen, Germany and Class III railhead job. He also inspected road construction at Eysden Bridge School. Job 98, QM D<sub>3</sub> road maintenance was completed at 1700. 80 man hours, 20 motor grader hours and 6 bulldozer hours were used.

22 November 1944.

The companies continued work on previous assignments. Two reconnaissance parties were sent out today in quest for sawmills.

The battalion CO inspected the class III railhead job which was completed at 1700 hours. 5000 manhours, 100 bulldozer hours, 1280 truck hours, 94 shovel hours, 1500 cubic yards of rock were consumed.

The battalion was relieved of the Eysden bridge school job at 1700, the job being turned over to the 3052d Engr C Bn. The battalion was relieved of maintenance responsibility of highway N 43 to the same unit.

23 November 1944.

Company "A" did road maintenance in assigned areas. The other companies continued on previous assignments.

One man was evacuated by the medical detachment to the 105th Evacuation Hospital with Gonorrhoea.

Company B was assigned the task of repairing the installation of the Ponton Bridge at South Maastricht. Damage was caused by high flood stage of the Mass River. Job was completed at 100 hours. Six men were given a special assignment by Group Headquarters.

24 November 1944.

The battalion commander inspected road maintenance in Aachen and Sawmills in operation.

25 November 1944

Company "C" continued to work on the job of putting the Monastery heating system in operation. The battalion commander inspected road maintenance in the assigned area.

26 November 1944.

Company "C" repaired damage to the bridge on highway N 1 near Gulpen. The battalion CO inspected road maintenance in Aachen and other road maintenance in the assigned area.

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