

History

of the

344TH ENGINEER GENERAL SERVICE REGIMENT

29 April 1942 - 1 November 1945

The 344th Engineer General Service Regiment was constituted within the IV Corps area in 1921 as an Organized Reserve unit. It was activated into Federal Service at Camp Claiborne, Louisiana 29 April 1942 and was organized, in general, with officers from civilian life, enlisted cadremen from the 113th Engineer Combat Battalion and selectees direct from Reception Centers in the I, II, VI and IX Corps Areas. Its initial training in the United States was basic and very limited.

The regiment moved overseas 1 July 1942, arriving at Gourock, Scotland, 12 July 1942. It was immediately assigned to Southern Base Section, ETOUSA, and undertook construction projects in Southern England between 18 July 1942 and 18 September 1942 and again between 18 December 1942 and 18 January 1943. During the interim, it was trained as an engineer combat regiment.

The regiment again moved overseas 24 January 1943, arriving at Oran, Algeria 1 February 1943. It was assigned to Mediterranean Base Section, NATOUSA, and undertook general construction projects in North Africa between 2 February 1943 and 18 July 1943 and again between 1 September 1943 and 12 November 1943. During the interim, it was assigned to Fifth Army and attached to Fifth Army Invasion Training Center under which it trained as an engineer shore regiment and then trained the 36th Infantry Division and one combat team of the 34th Infantry Division in amphibious operations for the invasion of Italy. Between 5 July 1943 and 4 October 1943, Company B was assigned to Eastern Base Section, NATOUSA, and was replaced by Company B, 337th Engineer General Service Regiment while the regiment was engaged in amphibious training and operations.

The regiment again moved overseas 14 November 1943, arriving at Naples, Italy, 17 November 1943. It was again assigned to Fifth Army and undertook missions as engineer combat troops until 30 June 1944. Beginning 15 January 1944, the regiment served in direct support of the French Expeditionary Corps.

The regiment moved to Civitavecchia, Italy, 30 June 1944, where it (less motors, which moved overland) embarked 1 July 1944 for Pozzoli, Italy, arriving 2 July 1944. It was assigned to Seventh Army and attached to VI Corps under which it moved to training areas near Naples, Italy and trained as engineer combat troops preparatory to the invasion of Southern France. 1st Battalion was further attached to the 36th Infantry Division between July 1944 and 18 August 1944 for training and for the invasion.

04/30/2

History of the 344th Engr Regt (GS) cont'd.

The regiment (less 1st Battalion) again moved overseas 13 August 1944, disembarking over the beaches near St. Maxime, France, 15 August 1944, and then, being joined by the 1st Battalion, served in direct support alternately, of the 3rd, 36th and 45th Infantry Divisions, as engineer combat troops until 14 September 1944 when it reverted to Army control. The Regiment then supported Seventh Army's advance through Northern France, Germany and Austria, as engineer combat troops until 24 May 1945, being alternately in direct support of VI, XV, and XXI Corps. Between 18 August 1944 and 1 September 1944, Company F supported the Butler Task Force, VI Corps, both as engineers and infantry.

The regiment was assigned to Delta Base Section, ETOUSA, 25 May 1945, under which it moved, by train and motors, to the vicinity of Marseille, France, closing in on 31 May 1945, and undertook construction projects at the Calas Staging Area and vicinity, until 15 August 1945, when it was relieved for readjustment of its personnel, and its reorganization and return to the United States as a unit in strategic reserve.

By 1 November 1945 all of the original officers and enlisted men, except the commanding officer, had been relieved and returned to the United States for discharge, and the regiment, with authorization for 115% of its allowable strength in new officers and enlisted men subject to discharge, was prepared to move into a staging area pending its shipment to the United States in November for disbandment.

The regiment is authorized the European-African-Middle Eastern Service Ribbon with battle participation stars for the Naples-Foggia, Rome-Arno, Southern France, Rhineland and Central Europe Campaigns; and the Bronze Arrowhead for its part in the initial assault landings on the beaches of Southern France.

The regiment received the Meritorious Service Unit Placque for its combat service with Seventh Army and its personnel received 5 Legion of Merit awards, 3 Silver Star Awards, 7 Bronze Star awards, 19 Soldier's medals, 35 Purple Heart awards and 3 Croix de Guerre awards. In addition 2 received the Insignia of the French 19th Engineer Regiment and 20 the Insignia of the French First Regiment of Zouaves. The regiment, as a whole, received 26 commendations and commendatory letters during its overseas tour of duty.

04/30/2

History of the 344th Engr Regt (GS) cont'd.

The service of the regiment has been unique for although it was initially organized as an engineer service unit, it was later trained as an engineer combat unit and at times during its operations has been called upon to serve in every conceivable military engineering capacity. While assigned to the various Service Force commands it has installed pipe lines and tank farms and constructed depots, airports, prisoner-of-war enclosures, hospitals and camps together with their attendant buildings of prefabricated or original design, roads, runways and utility systems. While assigned to the several Ground Force commands it, or elements thereof, have served as infantry, both in defensive and offensive action, as division, corps and army engineers, and as engineer shore troops. While operating in the latter capacity the regiment has constructed tactical roads and by-passes; constructed and maintained floating and trestle treadway bridges, ponton and Bailey ponton bridges; Bailey bridges and semi-permanent road and railroad bridges; laid, removed and marked minefields; organized and prepared and manned defensive zones; operated quarries and constructed and maintained road systems and hard standings; constructed and rehabilitated rail lines in forward areas, trained infantry for amphibious landings and engineer troops for combat engineer duty; and participated in amphibious landings.

The regiment was organized and commanded by Col. Lloyd H. Grandy, CE, RES, Atlanta, Georgia until 15 September 1942 when he was succeeded by Col. Ralph H. Cameron, CE, AUS (Cav. NG) San Antonio, Texas, who served with the regiment until disbandment.

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