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Authority 87354
By CP NARA Date 12/10/06

HEADQUARTERS, FIRST BATTALION
540TH ENGINEER REGIMENT
A.P.O. #758

1 September 1944.

SUBJECT: Daily Journal Report for the month of August 1944.

TO : The Commanding Officer, 540th Engineer Regiment, APO #758.

1. Daily Journal Report for the month of August 1944.

1 August 1944: 7 miles West of Aversa, Italy. Training schedule continued and followed by all Companies. Continued loading and packing of equipment. All Companies participated in swimming under the supervision of competent instructors.

2 August 1944: 7 miles West of Aversa, Italy. Training schedule continued and followed by all Companies. Packing and loading of equipment continued. All Companies participated in swimming under the supervision of competent instructors.

3 August 1944: 7 miles West of Aversa, Italy. Training schedule continued and followed by all Companies. Continued packing and loading of equipment. All Companies participated in swimming under the supervision of competent instructors.

4 August 1944: 7 miles West of Aversa, Italy. Training schedule continued and followed by all Companies. Continued packing and loading of equipment. Mine Clearance Groups from each Company consisting of 10 men and 1 officer cleared a 1000 yd. strip of beach that was to be used in coming Beach Problem. Nothing was found.

5 August 1944: 7 miles West of Aversa, Italy. All Companies with the exception of necessary kitchen help and overhead participated in Beach problem as scheduled. Companies left bivouac areas at scheduled times and loaded on ships in ports as directed.

6 August 1944: 7 miles West of Aversa, Italy. Beach Problem ended at 1100 hours and Companies returned to their bivouac areas. Remainder of the day used in packing and loading of equipment.

7 August 1944: 7 miles West of Aversa, Italy. Training Schedule continued and followed by all Companies. First of Personnel and vehicles started loading on board ships as scheduled in preparation for coming operation. Packing and loading of equipment continued.

8 August 1944: 7 miles West of Aversa, Italy. Training Schedule continued and followed by all Companies. Personnel and vehicles continued loading on board ships as scheduled. Packing and loading of equipment continued.

9 August 1944: 7 miles West of Aversa, Italy. Battalion breaking camp. Packing and loading of equipment continued and Personnel and Vehicles loading on board ships as scheduled.

10 August 1944: Having gone through their respective assembly areas, the entire Battalion with exception of rear echelon is now loaded aboard ship.

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10 August 1944: (cont.) in preparation for coming operation. Headquarters of the First Battalion loaded aboard LCI 902 in the Port of Pozzuoli, Italy at approximately 1500 hours. Spent the night anchored offshore of the port.

11 August 1944: Left Pozzuoli in the morning and headed South toward Salerno. Arrived in the Bay of Salerno at 1700 hours. Spent the night anchored offshore Salerno.

12 August 1944: Anchored offshore Salerno all day and night.

13 August 1944: Left Bay of Salerno at 0800 hours heading north toward Corsica. Arrived in the Bay of Ajaccio, Corisca at 1630 hours. Anchored offshore all night.

14 August 1944: Left Ajaccio at 1600 hours for our destination.

15 August 1944: "D" Day. Company "A" participated as the assault Company of the First Battalion, in the amphibious operation near Plage du Drammont, France. At H plus 10 the reconnaissance Party led by the Company Commander landed with the first waves of the Infantry. Under the fire of small arms, machine guns and mortars the Party made a reconnaissance of the beach. Beach markers were set up and also the Shore Party CP. Because of the stony nature of the beach it was determined that it would not be necessary to lay summerfelt matting. Only the right flank of the beach was found suitable for roads and because of the two hundred yard frontage of the beach wheeled and tracked vehicles would initially have to use the same road which would be two lane, one way traffic. The Beach Obstacle team landed at H plus 20 and finding no constructed obstacles, joined the Reconnaissance Party. The Mine Clearing Detail landed at H plus 20 and found no mines in the immediate beach area so they also joined the Reconnaissance Party. Work on the beach roads was greatly expedited with their help. The Weapons Sections, three in all landed at H plus 60 and took up positions on the left and right flanks of the beach. Enemy fire was being received from the right flank and two weapons sections attacked the enemy positions with machine guns, bazookas and small arms. A medium tank of the 141st Regimental Combat team having taken a defensive position covered the advance of the Weapons sections. The engagement lasted thirty minutes and one pill box, three houses and entrenchments and 35 prisoners were taken. The weapons sections suffered no casualties. The Pioneer Platoons landed at H plus 90 and being evident that there was no need for beach matting assumed other duties on the beach. In spite of periodic heavy shelling the unloading of ships never slowed down. Casualties were suffered but work continued. At 1330 hours Green Beach was notified that Red Beach was too Hot for the 142nd Regimental Combat Team to land on so they would have to come across Green Beach. The first waves of LCVP's hit the beach at 1430 hours and continued unloading at a rapid pace. About 1530 hours during a heavy artillery barrage, a partially unloaded LCT was hit on the stern setting fire to a large quantity of gas stored there. Drivers of the vehicles were forced to go ashore and with the recruited help of some sailors, the Shore Party unloaded the burning craft and then proceeded to get the fire under control with the ships fire extinguishers. During the day unloading continued at a frenzied pace, punctuated by artillery fire. "A" Company was relieved by "C" Company at 1800 hours. During the initial reconnaissance 5 casualties were suffered. 2 Officers and 3 Enlisted men. Company "B" landed on Green Beach at 1050 hours and then proceeded to a prearranged assembly area, three hundred yards inland to reform. Ordered to Yellow Beach to develop it. Two shells landed in the bivouac area and an MP was hit. On the road to Yellow Beach three shells landed within fifty feet of the column. At Agay, Contacted Company G of the 141st Infantry about 1330 hours. Proceeded to the Agay River during which time ten rounds of 57MM were fired at an occupied pill box. At the same time the 141st Infantry was mortaring the pill box. Patrol proceeded to Yellow Beach and was

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15 August 1944. (cont.) fired on by enemy mortars. 2 casualties resulted. Enemy mortar positions were silenced by the Infantry. Made reconnaissance of the Beach and found it to be heavily mined. Marked lanes for roads and swept the beach for mines. 1 - D-7 Dozer hit a mine and was knocked out. Driver was not injured. During this time the beach was subject to small arms fire but pill box was later knocked out by the Infantry. Company was relieved by the Second Battalion at about 1600 hours. Company returned to Drammont and went into bivouac. One enemy air raid encountered at 2100 hours. No casualties, and number of enemy planes in the raid was undetermined.

Company "C":- Underwater Demolition Crews landed at H plus 12 and as there were no underwater demolition the crews worked on the improvement of the Beach until about 1055 hours. The Weapons Sections landed at H plus 60. These men made reconnaissance and acted as guides for the main part of the Company which landed at 1055 hours. The heavy equipment section arrived at 1055 hours and was immediately assigned to the repairing of a road that was heavily damaged by our bombers just prior to H Hour. Despite the use of 3 - D-7 Dozers this road was not open to Trucks or Infantry vehicles until 1130 hours.

Medical Detachment:- At H plus 65, 2 Officers and eight men of the detachment, with one Officer and twenty litter bearers from the 56th Medical Battalion, landed on Green Beach. Under fire the unit proceeded 150 yards up the beach and set up a collecting, clearing and aid station near an abandoned fishermen's shack. On this day (D Day) fifty two men were officially tagged as casualties. In addition to this there were approximately 150 men treated who had been tagged by the Infantry and Navy Medics. Up until 2400 hours all men were evacuated to the Navy and thereafter to the clearing station of the 56th Medical Battalion. First Battalion Headquarters:- Consisting of 4 Officers and eight men landed at H plus 60 on Green Beach in an LCI as center vessel of three in that wave. For that reason only one casualty was suffered as both outer vessels were subject to machine gun and small arms fire. Immediately upon debarking they proceeded to a prearranged meeting place about three hundred yards up the beach. After checking the house the Command Post was set up and communications were furnished almost immediately by the 74th Signal Company. By 1100 hours, the first of the beach reports were being recorded in permanent records and for the twenty four hour report. During this period two officers were making reconnaissance of the roads and beach facilities. One Sergeant was ordered and proceeded to locate assembly points for supplies, vehicles and personnel, and to put up directional signs to these areas. His work necessitated traveling into territory near the enemy and sometimes beyond points that the enemy occupied and fired from when our main body of vehicles advanced. Another Sergeant was ordered to locate a water point and proceeded to make his reconnaissance on foot, proceeding toward Agay, and to the future Yellow Beach until he came to the existing front lines. He did accomplish and returned to the Command Post. On this day the following were unloaded:- Vehicles - 2795, Personnel - 17395, POW's evacuated - 94, Casualties evacuated - 147.

16 August 1944:- (D plus 1) Company "A":- Company "A" was relieved of Green Beach at 1800 hours 16 August and alerted for movement at 2000 hours. Approximately 2200 hours, the company moved to the present location. Company "B":- Company "B" received orders at 0830 hours to proceed to Red Beach and develop it. Proceeded to St. Raphael, went through town cleaning out snipers. Contacted Company "D", 143rd Infantry west of St. Raphael at 1400 hours. At 1630 hour, captured eight German prisoners in an air raid shelter. Red Beach was under enemy fire, and at 1800 hours occupied Red Beach. Company went into bivouac north of Red Beach. Work started on Red Beach, which was mined, and had a reinforced concrete wall eight feet high and four feet thick around it. Extensive demolition took place to clear way for road. One air raid at 2100 hours. No casualties.

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16 August 1944:- (D plus 1) Cont. Company "C":- Company "A" relieved Company "C" of the operation of Green Beach at 0800 hours. At 1800 hours, Company "C" relieved Company "A" of the operation of Green Beach. Operation of Green Beach continued on a twenty four hour basis as well as improving the Beach. Medical Detachment:- Eighty seven men were tagged and evacuated to the 56th Medical Battalion. Battalion Headquarters:- Advance elements of Battalion Headquarters proceeded to Red Beach and set up temporary headquarters. The rear elements maintained the records at Green Beach. On this day the following were landed: Vehicles - 1515, Personnel - 8045, POW's evacuated - 756, Casualties evacuated - 231.

17 August 1944:- (D plus 2) Company "A":- At 1600 hours, 17 August 1944, work was started to prepare Red Beach #1 for operation. Mines and demolitions were cleared, heavy concrete road blocks were cleared, road were laid and at 1900 hours, 17 August 1944, Red Beach #1 was ready for operation. Company "B":- Continued work on Red Beach, Reconnaissance of beach disclosed three rows of obstacles, mined, thirty yards off shore. Cleared channel through them. Bulldozer hit mine. Driver was not injured. Company "C":- Continued operation of Green Beach. Medical Detachment:- The Medical Detachment moved to a site between Red Beach #1 and #2, near St. Raphael, France, and set up a permanent aid station. Here we are treating personnel unloaded at the beaches, laborers, and Navy personnel of the United States, Great Britain, and France. The detachment also treated German Prisoners for illness and wounds as they were being processed for evacuation. Two men were tagged and hospitalized. Battalion Headquarters:- Leaving 1 Officer and 1 man behind to coordinate and record activities at Green Beach, the rest of the Battalion Headquarters moved to Red Beach and established a permanent Command Post. On this day the following were landed: Vehicles - 960, Personnel - 5160, POW's evacuated - 2049, Casualties evacuated - 465.

18 August 1944:- (D plus 3) Company "A":- Landing craft did not commence until 0700 hours, 18 August 1944. Red Beach #1 had been operating twenty four hours daily to present time. Company "B":- Worked on Red Beach. Beach opened at 1800 hours. Unloaded 142 tons of Supplies. Company "C":- Departed from Drammont with Headquarters and two platoons and set up bivouac site one kilometer north of St. Raphael, France. One platoon remaining to operate Green Beach. At 1300 hours, started constructing an enlargement of Red Beach #1. Cleared and removed approximately 100 mines, laid matting and demolished a 60 foot gap in the sea wall for the main entrance to Red Beach. Medical Detachment:- 11 men were tagged and hospitalized at the 891st Collective and Clearing Station. Battalion Headquarters:- Rear element joined the Red Beach Command Post. On this date the following were landed:- Tons Cargo - 1021.5, Vehicles - 131, Personnel - 223, POW's evacuated - 1516, Casualties evacuated - 183.

19 August 1944:- (D plus 4) Company "A":- On 19 August 1944, at 1800 hours, Red Beach #1, at St. Raphael, France, was sufficiently cleared of mines, wire entanglements, beach and marine obstacles to begin unloading supplies and equipment on a 24 hour schedule. Company "B":- Continued loading supplies and improving beach. Unloaded 949 tons of supplies. 1 Bulldozer hit a mine. Driver was slightly wounded. Company "C":- Continued the enlargement of Red Beach #1. Removed 50 mines, cleared 6 sections of the sea wall. Repaired and laid new matting on Red Beach roads. One D-7 Dozer was damaged by a German Tellermine. Constructed Signal Tower for Navy on Red Beach #1. Cleared 100 feet of beach west of Red Beach #1 of mines and flame throwers. Battalion Medics:- Eleven men were evacuated by the 891st Collective Clearing Station, one of whom due to illness was a member of the First Battalion, 540th Engineer Regiment. Battalion Headquarters:- Normal beach recording. On this date the following were landed:- Tons Cargo - 2726, Vehicles - 228, Personnel - 553, POW's evacuated - 0, Glider Pilots Evac. - 52.

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20 August 1944:-(D plus 5) Company "A":- Unloading of supplies and equipment continued with men working in three shifts, each shift working 6 hours and off 12 hours. Company "B":- Continued operation and improvement of Red Beach #2. Company "C":- Operation of Green Beach on 24 hour basis continued by 3rd platoon, at Plage du Drammont. 1st and 2nd platoons worked on Red Beach at St. Raphael. They cleared 200 yards of mine field, pulled up over 100 mines. The debris of 6 sections of sea wall breached by explosives was cleared away. Laid road matting. Battalion Medics:- Four men were evacuated to the 891st Collective Clearing Station, one of whom was a member of First Battalion, 540th Engineer Regiment, Company "A". Battalion Headquarters:- Normal beach operation recording. On this date the following were landed:- Tons Cargo - 3890, Vehicles - 429, Personnel - 2518, POW's evacuated ; 339.

21 August 1944:-(D plus 6) Company "A":- Continued operation of Red Beach #1. Company "B":- Continued operation and improvement of Red Beach #2. Company "C":- Third platoon continued operation of Green Beach until 1400 hours, then moved to join the rest of company. The other two platoons continued their work on Red Beaches. The 2nd platoon under an officer, rigged piles as anchors for pontoon floats. The 1st Platoon under the direction of an officer loaded and hauled from Green Beach to Red Beach and surfaced road ways with the gravel. Battalion Medics:- Eight men were evacuated to the 891st Collective Clearing Station. None from the 540th Engineer Regiment. Battalion Headquarters:- Normal beach operation and recording. On this day the following were landed:- Tons Cargo - 2275.5, Vehicles - 679, Personnel - 1634, POW's evacuated - 0, Casualties evacuated - 195.

22 August 1944:-(D plus 7) Company "A":- Continued operation of Red Beach #1. Company "B":- Continued operation and improvement of Red Beach #2. Company "C":- 2nd platoon laid 100 yards of matting on Red Beaches. 1st platoon continued to haul gravel and surface the roads on Red Beach. Battalion Medics:- 11 men were evacuated to the 891st Collective Clearing Station, one of whom was from the 540th Engineer Regiment, First Battalion. Battalion Headquarters:- Normal beach operation and recording. On this date the following were landed:- Tons Cargo - 2319, Vehicles - 428, Personnel - 910, Officers - 2, POW's evacuated - 300, Casualties evacuated - 10.

23 August 1944:-(D plus 8) Company "A":- Continued operation and improvement of Red Beach #1. Company "B":- Continued operation and improvement of Red Beach #2. Company "C":- The 3rd platoon under an officer completely policed Green Beach and then maintained matting on Red Beach #2. 2nd platoon drove more piling to use as anchors for pontoon floats, also repaired matting on Red Beach #1. Battalion Medics:- 11 men were evacuated to 891st Collective Clearing Station, consisting of 1 enlisted man from First Battalion, 540th Engineer Regiment. A sanitary inspection was made of Companies "A", "B", and "C", and sanitation was found to be satisfactory in general. Atabrine is being taken daily. Requisitioned from QM through S-4. Battalion Headquarters:- Normal beach operation recording. On this date the following were landed:- Tons Cargo - 5058, Vehicles - 69, Personnel - 96.

24 August 1944:-(D plus 9) Company "A":- Continued Operation of Red Beach #1. Company "B":- Continued Operation of Red Beach #2. Company "C":- 1st Lt. Trigg and the First Platoon laid additional matting along the complete length of Red Beach #1. The Second Platoon repaired and replaced damaged matting on Red Beach #2. Also hauled logs for ballards piling for Red Beaches. The Third Platoon continued to load, haul and spread gravel on Red Beach roadways. Battalion Medics:- Seven men were evacuated to the 891st Collective Clearing Station, consisting of two men from Company "B" 540th Engineer Regiment, for observation, two German prisoners with gun shot wounds, and three men from attached units. Battalion Headquarters:-

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24 August 1944:-(D plus 9) Cont. Normal beach operation recording. On this date the following were landed:- Tons Cargo - 5929.5, Vehicles - 6, Personnel - 93, POW's evacuated - 432.

25 August 1944:-(D plus 10) Company "A":- Continued Operation of Red Beach #1. Company "B":- Continued Operation of Red Beach #2. Company "C":- The first platoon, under the supervision of 1st Lt. Trigg, drove seventeen piling from LCT anchorage on Red Beach #2. Twenty five yards of Somerfelt matting were laid for damaged matting that could not be repaired. Red Beach was completely policed. The second platoon hauled twenty logs to be used for piling on Red Beach. They hauled twelve truck loads of gravel from Green Beach to use for surfacing Red Beach road net. Also repaired the damaged Somerfelt matting. The third platoon hauled twenty three truck loads of gravel from Green Beach for Red Beach road net and checked a mine field across from Red Beach exit. One S-mine and one teller mine were found. Battalion Medics:- Ten men were evacuated to the 891st Collective Clearing Station, consisting of one German prisoner, one Paratrooper, one French Army Officer, two Infantry soldiers, and the balance from attached units of the 1st Battalion, 540th Engineer Regiment. Battalion Headquarters:- Normal beach operation recording. On this date the following were landed:- Tons Cargo - 4501, Vehicles - 2, Personnel - 118, POW's evacuated - 1200.

26 August 1944:-(D plus 11) Company "A":- Continued Operation of Red Beach #1. Company "B":- Continued Operation of Red Beach #2. Company "C":- The first platoon policed the beach and repaired road matting. They drove five piles for anchorage on Red Beach #2. The second platoon, under the supervision of 1st Lt. Marks, drove three piles for anchorage on Red Beach #1. They cut and hauled four more logs from Green Beach. Twelve Truck loads of gravel were hauled by the second platoon completing graveling of Red Beach road net. The third platoon completed clearing the mine field across from Red Beach exit but no mines were found. This area was intended for a DUKW refueling point. Thirty two truck loads of gravel were hauled from Green Beach for Red Beach road net. Battalion Medics:- Five men were evacuated to the 891st Collective Clearing Station, consisting of two French Army soldiers, two American Port Battalion soldiers, and one enlisted man from Company "A", 540th Engineer Regiment. Battalion Headquarters:- Normal beach operation recording. On this date the following were landed:- Tons Cargo - 5058, Vehicles - 360, Personnel - 1419.

27 August 1944:-(D plus 12) Company "A":- Continued Operation of Red Beach #1. Company "B":- Continued Operation of Red Beach #2. Company "C":- The first platoon started construction of an approach for the pontoon floats. Twenty one narrow rails were driven as piling and foundation for the fill, consisting of eighty sandbags, completed. Red Beach #1, was swept for mines as an emergency measure in the event any mines had been missed the first time. No mines were found. The third platoon cleared one section of Red Beach #2, and removed fifty one teller mines. Twenty nine truck loads of gravel were loaded and hauled from Green Beach for Red Beach road net. This platoon, under the direction of 2nd Lt. Marks, also maintained the repair of road matting. Battalion Medics:- Normal first aid duties. Battalion Headquarters:- Normal beach operation recording. On this date the following were landed:- Tons Cargo - 4146.5, Vehicles - 76, Personnel - 158, POW's evacuated - 450.

28 August 1944:-(D plus 13) Company "A":- Continued Operation of Red Beach #1. Company "B":- Continued Operation of Red Beach #2. Company "C":- The first platoon continued work on the approaches to the pontoon floats. The side rails were cribbed and filled with five loads of large rock and six loads of gravel.

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28 August 1944:-(D plus 13) Cont. Eight loads of gravel were hauled from Green Beach for surfacing Red Beach roads by the second platoon. Twenty five feet of new matting was laid at the Dukw entrance. The third platoon, under the direction of 2nd Lt. Zvirblis, removed twenty mines from the left flank of Red Beach #2. Three hundred teller mines were loaded and hauled from Red Beach #2, to Green Beach and were dumped into the sea approximately two and one half miles off shore. Battalion Medics:- Normal first aid duties. Battalion Headquarters:- Normal beach operation recording. On this date the following were landed. Tons Cargo: - 5665, Vehicles - 15, Personnel 18, POW's evacuated - 100.

29 August 1944:-(D plus 14) Company "A":- Continued Operation of Red Beach #1. Company "B":- Continued Operation of Red Beach #2. Company "C":- Cut and carried forty railroad rails to Red Beach #2 to be used as road posts. Eighteen loads of gravel handloaded at Green Beach and hauled to Red Beaches to be used as road surface. Repaired all damaged road matting on both beaches. Beaches entirely policed and all debris buried. Battalion Medics:- Normal first aid duties. Battalion Headquarters:- Normal beach operation recording. On this date the following were landed:- Tons Cargo:-4728, Vehicles - 10, Personnel - 3, POW's evacuated - 100.

30 August 1944:-(D plus 15) Company "A":- Continued Operation of Red Beach #1. Company "B":- Continued Operation of Red Beach #2. Company "C":- Drove 34 steel road posts at 20 ft. intervals. 3/8" cable strung through 20 posts, posts painted. Removed 30 ft. of barbed wire entanglements. 22 mines were lifted at extreme right flank of Red Beach #2. 110 sandbags filled and placed on ramp approaches to pontoon floats 1 truck-load of sand and 1 of gravel were hand loaded and spread on ramp approaches. 15 loads of gravel hauled and used in surfacing of roads. Repaired damaged matting and policed the Beaches. Battalion Medics:- Normal first aid duties. Battalion Headquarters:- Normal beach operation recording. On this date the following were landed: Tons Cargo - 3194.5, Vehicles - 118, Personnel - 137.

31 August 1944:-(D plus 16) Company "A":- Continued Operation of Red Beach #1. Company "B":- Continued Operation of Red Beach #2. Company "C":- 32 rails were driven in as road markers, these were also painted, and strung with cable. Lifted 14 teller mines from Red Beach #2. Laid 65 yards of matting on Red Beach road. Placed 5 concrete blocks in center entrance of Red Beach #2, these are to act as road blocks. Loaded 13 loads of gravel at Green Beach and hauled to Red Beaches and spread to surface roads. Laid 115 feet of matting and maintained all matting laid previously. Repaired Dukw entrance on Red Beach #1. Drove in road posts hit and knocked down during the night. Policed both of Red Beaches. Battalion Medics:- Normal first aid duties. Battalion Headquarters:- Normal beach operation recording. On this date the following were landed: Tons Cargo - 4312.5, Vehicles - 643, Personnel - 1012, POW's evacuated - 400, Tracked Vehicles - 4, Half-tracks - 4, Artillery - 7.

Battalion Strength as of 1 August 1944.

Officers - 20
Enlisted Personnel - 607

Battalion Strength as of 31 August 1944.

Officers - 19
Enlisted Personnel - 606

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For the Commanding Officer:

Donald E. Casey
DONALD E. CASEY
Captain, C. E.
Executive Officer