

HEADQUARTERS, FIRST BATTALION  
540TH ENGINEER REGIMENT  
A.P.O. #464

/lk  
9 October 43.

SUBJECT: First Battalion, 540th Engineer Regiment, Journal for month of September 1943.

TO : Commanding Officer, 540th Engineer Regiment, A.P.O. #464.

1. Submitted herewith is First Battalion, 540th Engineer Regiment, Journal for the month of September 1943.

(a) Pre-invasion Activities (September 1-9).

Personnel of this command performed diverse duties at the port of TERMINI IMMERSE, Sicily. Essentially these duties were related to the unloading, transporting, segregating, storing, and issuing of various types of supplies and equipment. In addition the command was made responsible for the construction of suitable installations for the loading of a Sub-Task Force. In this capacity new roads were constructed and existing ones improved. The harbor was cleared of certain sunken small craft and other dock and underwater obstacles removed.

Preparation for the pending invasion was in general efficient. Previously prepared data on vehicles, equipment, and supplies and experience gained in previous operations expedited the compilation of various loading plans. Inadequate space allotment disrupted planning and essential items of equipment and vehicles were assigned to later lifts. Pertinent information relative to the landing operation was lacking and therefore definite assignments impractical. Morale was noticeably high during this preparatory stage.

(b) Landing Operation, Paestrum, Italy (September 9-11).

Elements of the command landed on five previously established beaches. Upon assembling all units were assigned to the operation of one of the prepared beaches. Simultaneously extensive beach, road and dump reconnaissances were made in the vicinity of the mouth of the Sele River. Subsequently Blue Beach #2, and dumps for all classes of supplies were established in an area south of the Sele River.

(c) Beach and Dump Operations (September 12-30).

For several days following the establishment of Beach Blue #2 supplies were moved across the beach by means of DUKWS loaded from LST's anchored off-shore. Subsequently the operations were expanded and personnel, vehicles, and supplies were moved across the beach for 24 hours daily in an orderly manner. The beach was kept relatively free from supplies during the entire operation. The various supply dumps were operated until responsibility was assumed by the appropriate supply service. The behavior of personnel during periods of intense excitement and extreme tension was noteworthy.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority 735017

RFQ NARA Date 12/2/95

Reproduced at the National Archives

Although subjected to intermittent night and day strafing and bombing attacks, each unit continued to perform its assigned duties in a disciplined manner until the beach operations were terminated.

For the Commanding Officer:

*Olen B. Garrison*  
OLEN B. GARRISON  
Capt., C. E.,  
Executive Officer.