

EIGHTH BEACH BATTALION
FLEET POST OFFICE
New York, N. Y.

8Bn/A9-4/(hdb)
Serial 043

Reg. No.	2739
R. S. No.	

C O N F I D E N T I A L

26 October 1944.

From: Commanding Officer, EIGHTH Beach Battalion.
To: Chief of Naval Operations.

Subject: War Diary, EIGHTH Beach Battalion, for the Month of August, 1944 -
Transmittal of.

1. The War Diary of the EIGHTH Beach Battalion for the month of August, 1944 is submitted herewith.

2. Due to the exigencies of the service the submission of this war diary has been unavoidably delayed.


JOHN P. GRAFF.

CONFIDENTIAL

WAR DIARY, EIGHTH BEACH BATTALION, FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST, 1944.

During the month of August, one officer was detached from the EIGHTH Beach Battalion.

During the early part of the month, the battalion, with its combat equipment, was made ready for a combat operation, and personnel and equipment were loaded according to the loading plan of the 540th Combat Engineer Regiment, U. S. Army, to which the battalion was attached.

On August 7th and 8th, the Beach Battalion took part in a training operation in which personnel and portable equipment were landed from seaward. Each unit of the Beach Battalion rehearsed its part with the battalion or company of the Engineer Regiment to which it was assigned. The entire Beach Battalion, with the exception of a small rear echelon at Salerno, was embarked in APA's, LST's, LCI's, LCT's, and Liberty ships by August 10th, and sailed according to plan, with their various units, for the assault destination.

On August 15th, the battalion took part in the Camel Area assault on the coast of Southern France. Units of the battalion went ashore in the second assault wave at H plus 10 minutes (H hour 0800), and continued landing at H plus 65, H plus 100, and H plus 185, when the entire "A" Company was on the beach and performing its shore operations duties. This company landed at "Green Beach" just west of Cape Dramont, and about three miles east of the town of St. Raphael. By the middle of the afternoon on D-day, the entire three companies of the battalion had come ashore across "Green Beach". The beach was under enemy small arms fire during the morning, and under enemy shell fire throughout the day, - there was one air attack at dusk. No gunfire casualties were sustained by the EIGHTH Beach Battalion, but during the first three days of the operation, six enlisted personnel were wounded by enemy mines, and were evacuated to seaward. "Yellow Beach" at Rade d'Agay was opened on the evening of the 15th, and put into full operation on the 16th. When the town of St. Raphael and the beaches immediately to the westward of the town were cleared of the enemy, and the mines and obstacles, "Red Beaches One and Two" were opened, - this was on D plus three and D plus four. Headquarters for the battalion was established at the small boat harbor of the Port of St. Raphael on D plus four. "Yellow Beach" and "Green Beach" were closed and the activities of the Beach Battalion were confined to the operation of "Red Beaches One and Two", and the Port of St. Raphael.

Two NCDU teams reported to the Commanding Officer, EIGHTH Beach Battalion, on D-day for temporary duty, and, on D plus one, elements of the 1040th C.B.'s, with twelve strings of pontoon causeways, reported for temporary duty. Also reporting for temporary duty were Naval Intelligence Officers, a Bomb Disposal Officer, a Mine Disposal Officer, and a French Liaison Officer. The NCDU teams completed their work about D plus five, and were detached. On about D plus ten, the Bomb Disposal and Mine Disposal Officers, and the French Liaison Officer and Naval Intelligence Officers, completed their temporary duty assignments and were detached. The 1040th C.B.'s set up pontoon causeways at "Red Beaches One and Two", where they were moored to piles and used as heavy-lift piers.

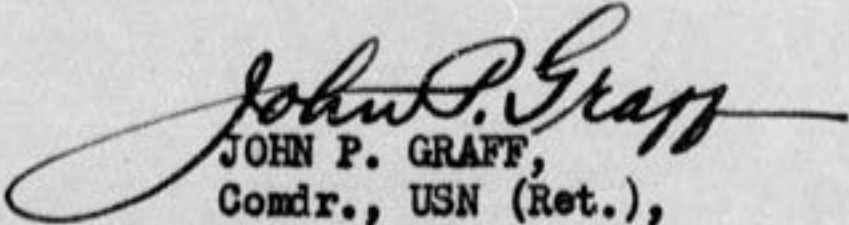
CONFIDENTIAL

WAR DIARY, EIGHTH BEACH BATTALION, FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST, 1944.

During the assault phase of the Camel operation, the companies of the EIGHTH Beach Battalion bivouacked with, and subsisted with, the battalions and companies of the 540th Engineers to which they were assigned. The entire Beach Battalion worked in harmony and close cooperation with the 540th Engineer Regiment, and supplies were expedited across the beaches during the assault and post-assault phases.

As a matter of note; with the exception of one infantry battalion that landed at Antheor, ("Blue Beach"), the entire 36th Division, with all of its personnel, vehicles, artillery, tanks and equipment, was put across "Green Beach", (230 yards wide), during D-day.

Some 7,000 prisoners of war were evacuated to seaward during the first six days of the operation, and prisoners were being sent to seaward from "Green Beach" before noon of D-day. About 1400 casualties, brought back from the lines, were treated, tagged, and evacuated to seaward before the Army hospital units were set up inland and took over the hospitalization of the wounded. The LST 282 was struck by an enemy glider bomb at about 2010 on August 15th about 400 yards offshore at "Green Beach". The ship burst into flames and drifted ashore about a quarter of a mile to the westward. Wounded survivors were cared for at the Beach Battalion First-aid station.


JOHN P. GRAFF,
Comdr., USN (Ret.),
Commanding Officer.

EIGHTH BEACH BATTALION
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Serial 044

Reg. No.

2740

R. S. No.

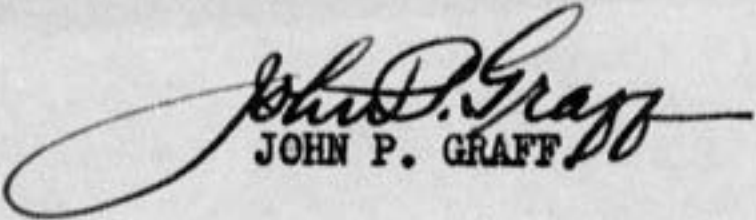
C O N F I D E N T I A L

26 October 1944.

From: Commanding Officer, EIGHTH Beach Battalion.
To: Chief of Naval Operations.
Subject: War Diary, EIGHTH Beach Battalion, for the Month of September, 1944 - Transmittal of.

1. The War Diary of the EIGHTH Beach Battalion for the month of September, 1944, is submitted herewith.

2. Due to the exigencies of the service the submission of this war diary has been unavoidably delayed.


JOHN P. GRAFF

CONFIDENTIAL

WAR DIARY, EIGHTH BEACH BATTALION, FOR THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER, 1944.

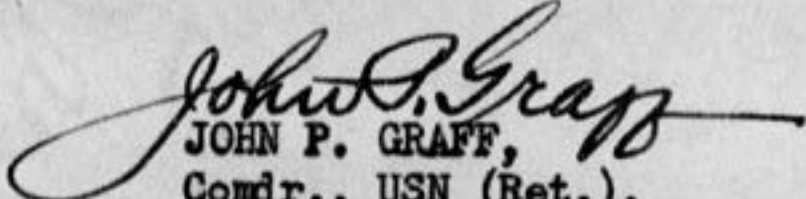
During the month of September, four enlisted men were transferred from the EIGHTH Beach Battalion, - two of these men were among those wounded during the assault on Southern France, and were sent from evacuation hospitals to the United States.

The EIGHTH Beach Battalion continued in its duties at the beaches and Port of St. Raphael. On September 10th, when the 540th Combat Engineer Regiment, U. S. Army, was ordered forward, the EIGHTH Beach Battalion completed its temporary duty with that organization and reported back to CTF 87 for duty, and continued to maintain the beach operations at St. Raphael, cooperating with a newly arrived Port Battalion of the SEVENTH Army.

When released from duty with the 540th Engineers, with whom the Beach Battalion had been messing, field ranges and Army field kitchen equipment was requisitioned, and the EIGHTH Beach Battalion became a self-sustaining Navy unit ashore.

On September 10th, "B" Company of the EIGHTH Beach Battalion was sent to Marseille, France, and reported to the U.S. Naval Liaison Officer, French Ports, and further reported to U.S. Naval Detachment, Marseille, France for temporary duty. This company performed its regular beach battalion duties at Marseille and Port de Bouc, together with setting up the harbor communications organization at Marseille.

On September 24th, "C" Company, with all of its equipment, embarked in the LST 47 for transportation to AATB, Bizerte, where they arrived and camped on the Base on September 29th. The temporary duty of the 1040th C.B.'s who had been attached to the EIGHTH Beach Battalion was completed on September 24th. "A" Company of the Beach Battalion continued to operate the St. Raphael beaches and port until all unloading operations were completed on September 26th. In Bizerte, "C" Company went to work reconditioning rolling stock and battalion equipment. In St. Raphael, "A" Company carried on routine camp duties and assembled and packed equipment preparatory to moving out.


JOHN P. GRAFF,
Comdr., USN (Ret.),
Commanding Officer.

8Bn/A9-4/(hdb)
Serial 046

EIGHTH BEACH BATTALION
FLEET POST OFFICE
New York, N.Y.

Reg. No. 2898

R. S. No.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

1 November 1944.

From: Commanding Officer, EIGHTH Beach Battalion.
To: Chief of Naval Operations.
Subject: War Diary, EIGHTH Beach Battalion, for the
Month of October, 1944 - Transmittal of.

1. The War Diary of the EIGHTH Beach Battalion for
the month of October, 1944, is submitted herewith.


JOHN P. GRAFF.

CONFIDENTIAL

WAR DIARY, EIGHTH BEACH BATTALION, FOR THE MONTH
OF OCTOBER, 1944.

During the month of October, six enlisted men were transferred from duty with the EIGHTH Beach Battalion. Two enlisted men, who had been wounded during the assault on Southern France, returned to the Battalion.

"A" Company of the EIGHTH Beach Battalion, at St. Raphael, carried out a limited training program, and assembled and packed equipment preparatory to leaving the locality. "B" Company continued its temporary duty at Marseille, France. "C" Company continued its work of overhauling its rolling stock and company gear at AATB, Bizerte, Tunisia.

On October 8th, "A" Company, with all remaining EIGHTH Beach Battalion equipment, embarked in the LST 47, and sailed for Bizerte, arriving there October 10th. Officers and men were quartered on the Base, and the Company went to work overhauling its rolling stock, and company gear and equipment. "B" Company completed its temporary duty with NavDet, Marseille, on October 12th, and embarked in the LST 491 with its company gear on October 13th, and arrived at Bizerte on October 17th. The officers and crew were quartered on the Base, and for the first time since July 4th, the EIGHTH Beach Battalion was assembled in one place.

A comprehensive and well-planned training program was instituted for the officers and crew of the Battalion, and put into operation on October 23rd. Elements of the Battalion set up and operated a Fire-Fighting School for the Base at Bizerte, and for the personnel afloat. One officer from the Battalion served as the instructor in Gas Warfare for the Base. The entire EIGHTH Beach Battalion received Gas Warfare instruction and practical gas mask drill in the gas chamber. One company completed the course in the newly instituted Fire-Fighting School. The complete training program included Fire-Fighting School, Chemical Warfare instruction, Communications (Blinker, Semaphore and Radio), Gunnery, Naval History, Articles for the Government of the Navy, Seamanship, Bulldozer School, Amphibious Operations and Hydrographic Work, Close Order Drill by platoons, and Organized Athletics. The Medical Company went to work in the Base Dispensary.

Personnel and living quarters of the Battalion were inspected on October 16th by Rear Admiral Frank Lowry, USN, (ComPhib8thFlt).

WAR DIARY, EIGHTH BEACH BATTALION, FOR THE MONTH
OF OCTOBER, 1944.

On October 19th, the officers and crew of the EIGHTH Beach Battalion were drawn up at parade while Vice Admiral H. K. Hewitt, USN, (Com8thFlt), decorated the following named officers and men with awards:

Silver Star Medal -

HODGE, Cecil (n), 829 60 54, S1c, V6, USNR

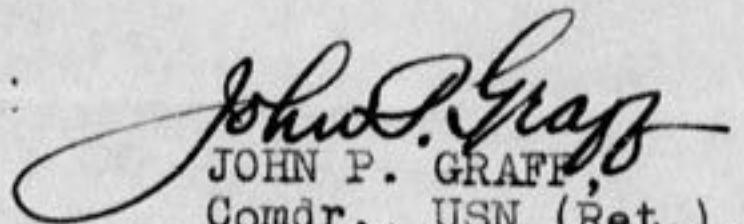
Bronze Star Medal -

Comdr. John P. GRAFF, USN (Ret.)
Lieut. J. J. DILLON, D-V(S), USNR
Lieut. G. R. WILLIAMS, D-V(S), USNR
Lt.(jg) H. H. TAYLOR, C-V(S), USNR

ADAMS, Robert H., 245 59 12, SM2c, V6, USNR
ESTES, John C., 613 22 55, SF2c(T), V-6, USNR
LAMBERT, Robert L., 829 60 19, S1c, V6, USNR
TIBBETTS, Austin B., Jr., 256 33 21, PhM1c, USN

Purple Heart Medal -

CRIMI, Frank (n), 565 13 82, F1c(MoMM), V-6, USNR
EARWAKER, William R., 884 69 11, MoMM3c, V-6, USNR.


JOHN P. GRAFF,
Comdr., USN (Ret.),
Commanding Officer.