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HEADQUARTERS 305TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO 80, U. S. Army

PERSONNEL AND ALLIED ADMINISTRATION FOR MONTH OF NOVEMBER 1944

Section I

	<u>K I A</u>	<u>M I A</u>	<u>W I A</u>
2 November	1		
3 November			6
5 November			2
7 November			1
15 November	1 EM		
17 November			1 officer
23 November			1 officer, 2 EM
26 November			1 EM

Section II Prisoners of War Captured

3 November	16
9 November	11
14 November	6
15 November	4
28 November	6
Total for month	43

Section III Replacements

	<u>EM</u>	<u>Officers</u>	<u>Total</u>
5 November	1		1
7 November		1	1
8 November	1	1 (Battle Appointment)	2
9 November	8		8
13 November	18		18
15 November	8		8
17 November	23		23
18 November	1		1
22 November	1		1
23 November	2		2
			<u>65</u>

Section IV Burial and Graves Registration

No burial were made this month by the battalion.

Section V Awards

Silver Star Awards - none

Bronze Star Awards

- (1) Lt. Colonel A. E. McCollan
- (2) Major Robert M. Rawls
- (3) P.F.C. Florian Mikulski
- (4) Pvt. John T. Rzasa

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Section VI Special Service

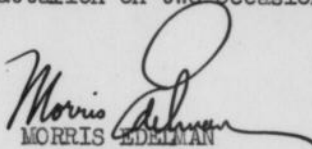
(1) Movies - During the first part of November the Special Service Office was able to show movies to the companies nightly. Later, generators were difficult to secure. Also the tactical situation, from 15 to 25 November prohibited the showing of any movies.

(2) PX supplies - Items such as cookies, crackers, cigars, watches, lighters, fountain pens, were made available to the men. Efforts were made to secure beer, but with no success.

Free stationery, envelopes, cards, and games were secured through Division Special Service Office.

Limited passes to Paris were allowed the men of the battalion and a break came when another Division unit canceled their quote allowing us to send 17 on one trip. This boosted the morale of the men.

Clubmobiles were available to the battalion on two occasions with their coffee and doughnuts.


MORRIS EDELMAN
1st Lt., C of E
S - 1.

HEADQUARTERS 305TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO 80, U. S. Army

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY FOR MONTH OF NOVEMBER 1944

The S-2 Section's contributions to the work of the battalion in the support of the 80th Infantry Division's attack were very numerous during this period.

Before the Seille River crossing, the Intelligence Section was kept busy furnishing the Commanding Officer and Division Staff with complete terrain studies of the area of our immediate sector of advance. Included in these studies were reports on all crossing sites over the Seille River; also, possible crossing sites. Day and night reconnaissance of the Seille River was made by our companies and oblique photos taken by the artillery were studied. All this information was compiled and published in conjunction with the division field order. Even after the bridges were constructed by the engineers, the problem of maintaining the roads, approaches, and bridges was enormous due to the flooded conditions of the Seille. The reconnaissance teams made daily checks on the height of the river, for flood conditions prevailed even after the attack commenced which forced us to abandon several bridges that were constructed but later flooded.

Enemy demolitions were very numerous. The companies were kept informed of all PW, civilian, P.I., and reconnaissance reports concerning engineer intelligence information. Cote De Dalme, the division objective, itself was a maze of mines and booby-trapped vineyards.

For the Neid-Francaise, and Neid-Alemande River crossings the companies were furnished with up to date information on all crossing sites. Again, as when we crossed the Seille, the river was at flood stage. On one occasion our reconnaissance section removed the demolitions from a bridge over the Neid River, enabling the armor to pass over the bridge.

Photo interpretation played a big part in obtaining a large amount of this information. At Cites des Charbonage, a large mine works, complete with dwellings and up to date office buildings, large quantities of captured engineer equipment was found.

On two different occasions the 305th Engineer Battalion was given credit for finding new enemy types of demolitions. Third Army, XII and XX Corps G-2 reports carried the accounts of our finding the new German "TOPF mine "A". Also, credit was given for finding four 250-lb bombs, to which were affixed grenades covered with dirt. By removing the dirt, the grenades would be set off, in turn detonating the four bombs.

The reconnaissance section had several close calls. On one occasion a piece of shrapnel from a mortar burst went through the radio that is mounted in each of the reconnaissance jeeps, narrowly missing the radio operator. On another occasion an armor piercing shell hit the jeep in which the reconnaissance officer, reconnaissance sergeant, and radio operator were riding. Fortunately none of them were injured, although the jeep itself was badly damaged.

The map depot continued to operate as efficiently as before, making many distributions to the units, keeping always ahead of the tactical schedule.

In St. Avold two time devices, "J - Feder 504", fixed to cases of dynamite were found in buildings occupied by our troops. A thorough search was made of all buildings as PWs and civilians reported as many as thirty (30) had been left by the Germans in their retreat to the Saar. Assistance was had from XII Corps and III Army EIT teams in the study and location of these devices.

At the close of the period the section was compiling data on the Saar River and surrounding terrain, which is the next objective of the 80th Infantry Division.

Frank Feleppa
FRANK FELEPPA
1st Lt. CE
S-2

HEADQUARTERS 305TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO 80, U. S. Army

SUMMARY OF DAILY OPERATIONS, NOVEMBER 1944

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Operations</u>	<u>Locations</u>
1-7 Nov	Conducted technical training for own troops and Infantry; Active patrolling and reconnaissance; Cleared friendly mines; Built corduroy road, maintained roads; Maintained equipment, prepared and assembled equipment for attack.	West of Seille River in the vicinity of Nomeny.
8-11 Nov	Crossed Infantry over Seille River; Constructed foot bridges, ferries, Infantry support raft bridges; treadway bridges, expedient tank crossings; Maintained Seille River crossings; repaired existing bridges; swept roads, removed enemy mines, abatis, and road blocks; built culverts.	Between Seille River and Nied Francaise River, North of Delme.
12-20 Nov	Crossed Infantry over Nied Francaise River and Rotte Creek; reconnoitered River crossing sites; built wooden trestle bridges, small treadway bridges, bailey bridges; maintained bridges; swept roads; removed and destroyed mines; removed abatis, cleared knocked out vehicles from roads; filled shell and bomb holes, craters; maintained and repaired roads; Installed temporary road blocks, trip flares; Cut and delivered logs for Infantry foxholes covers.	Between Nied-Francaise River and Nied-Allemande River, South of Remilly and Faulquemont.
21-24 Nov	Constructed foot bridges, operated ferries; built Class 40 bailey bridges, Infantry support raft bridges (all over Nied Allemande River); swept roads, maintained roads; removed and destroyed mines; cleared rubble and knocked out vehicles from roads, cleared abatis; repaired and constructed culverts, built bypasses; filled craters and maintained fills; constructed wooden trestle bridges.	In the vicinity of Faulquemont.
25-30 Nov	Repaired and filled blown culverts; filled numerous craters; filled and bridged anti-tank ditches; built road; built short treadway bridges; installed culverts; removed and destroyed mines and enemy explosives; cleared abatis, road blocks, knocked out vehicles; cleared debris; maintained roads; removed time bomb device.	In the vicinity of St. Avold.

OBSERVATIONS, COMMENTS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) General - After 8 November, when the attack was started, the Division encountered extensive enemy delaying activities, which kept the engineers busier than ever. Our two biggest problems were maintaining and repairing roads and enabling the division (and attached units) to cross the Seille, Nied Francaise, and Nied Allemande Rivers. Continuous rain and some snow swelled all creeks and rivers which added to our problems.

(2) Mines - We continued to encounter many mines, though not more than in previous periods. The enemy had marked many of his fields with signs and barbed wire. Only those mines were cleared that were obstacles to our advance, some fields were marked and had to be left for clearance by higher echelon. Most mine were Teller mines, Riegel mines, "S" mines and Stock mines. A few other types were encountered, and one new mine, the "Topf mine A".

(3) Roads - We again were restricted to the main, principally blacktop roads, due to continuous poor weather and soft soil conditions. Engineers had to be right up front to clear roads. During the middle of the month we had considerable work repairing numerous shell and bomb holes in roads, caused mainly by our artillery and air corps. Towards end of the month we encountered very many craters and blown culverts, some stretches of road north of the ~~Nied Altemunde River~~ had such obstacles every few hundred yards. The craters were very large, too, requiring as many as twenty-five loads of rock per crater. Craters in towns were filled with rubble from fallen masonry buildings, those away from towns were filled with large rock hauled from the nearest place such rock could be found, generally not too far away. At the entrances to towns log and concrete road blocks were encountered, which restricted traffic, did not completely block it. A large dozer could handle these.

Blown culverts and some of the larger craters were repaired by placing ~~dill-~~verts in them or bridging them either with I-beams and flooring or with steel treadway. In nearly all cases the road had to be repaired and maintained to enable class 40 traffic to pass.

(4) River crossings and bridges - No problems were presented in crossing Infantry. Even where rivers and creeks were flooded, they were generally not too deep. Foot bridges, ferries and Infantry support raft bridges were used to cross-light Infantry vehicles. For heavier traffic we installed class 40 wooden bridges, treadway bridges and Bailey bridges.

(5) Maginot Line and AT ditches - The division breached the main ~~Maginot~~ defenses between ~~Falquemont~~ and ~~St. Avold~~. They were only partially manned and no deliberate assault of the larger forts had to be made. The AT ditches in that area had to be bridged for class 40 traffic in many places. A large dozer filled it in, or it was bridged with treadway and Bailey. Many craters on roads had been blown in line with an AT ditch, which prevented our using a simple bypass. The need for large dozers and tank dozer was quite apparent in all this work. The R -4 proved to be too small, though it was used when nothing else was available.

(6) Miscellaneous - Water supply presented no problems. Some of the water was muddy, due to flooded conditions. In a few cases, when shifts in regimental sectors were made, the movement of water points was a little complicated.

During the lull prior to our attacks, aggressive patrolling and reconnaissance was conducted for river crossing sites.

(7) Supporting Engineers - Invaluable assistance was again rendered by the supporting Corps engineers. They took over all work we couldn't complete, or which was beyond the capacity of our own troops. They repaired and maintained roads right with us and behind us. They operated water points in the division area. Our communications and coordination with the 1117th Engineer Combat Group improved during the month.

Robert C. Marshall
ROBERT C. MARSHALL
Captain, C of E
S - 3.

HEADQUARTERS 305TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO EO, U. S. Army

HISTORICAL JOURNAL OF SUPPLY FOR NOVEMBER 1944

X With the beginning of November, inclement weather arrived in the form of incessant rainstorms, which caused many rivers to overflow their banks, and, even small streams became swift moving rivers. This hampered supply operations as well as tactical operations.

The water points, which were located on the Moselle, were threatened with this flood. Two of these water points were moved to higher ground, but one of them became completely surrounded by water so rapidly it was unable to operate. This one water point was in a dangerous situation. It was then on an island. The river flowed swiftly past this island, and was rising higher and higher by the hours. Attempts were made to rescue this water point the first day, but the swift rise of the river, the continuous inclement weather, and the lack of boats at the time made it futile.

The next morning early, personnel was sent with boats and other necessary material to rescue the waterpoint. The personnel had to wade hip deep water in order to save all the equipment. This rescue took approximately three and one-half hours. Upon checking this equipment, it was discovered that one tank, water, 3000 gallon capacity, and two pumps, centrifugal, water, were damaged somewhat by the flood. Requisitions were immediately submitted and serviceable equipment received in order that the water point would be able to operate.

About the same time, tactical operations called for bridge material. Bridge material was critical. It had to be secured from several different Engineer Units as well as the Corps Engineer Bridge Depot.

After the crossings were made, the supply office went on a scavenger hunt for boats, reconnaissance, floats, pneumatic 6 ton, and boats, assault. This hunt netted us three floats, pneumatic 6 ton, and six boats, assault. We still lacked seven boats, reconnaissance, six floats, pneumatic 6 ton, and one boat, assault to complete out our T/S allowances. These were immediately requisitioned and received within a shorter time than was expected. Usually it takes about one month before any such critical supplies are obtained.

This month presented several problems to solve.

Our first problem dealt with duffel bags and gas masks.

We could not store the gas masks, because Army orders specified that they would be carried on the unit train. Therefore, we shuttled these. The 2½ ton trailers were used to haul supplies in excess of their loads. All loads were consolidated, thereby, giving us one empty truck, which we finally used to transport this load.

We shuttled our duffel bags in our first move. When we made our second move, we decided to store them and leave a guard behind. We also had to leave other unessential equipment behind. Two days later we returned to pick up the duffel bags and other equipment.

Before our next move we decided to hunt for something suitable to haul these duffel bags. A German four-wheel trailer was found. However, because of the complicated structure of the front wheels of the trailer, it could not be changed for use by us, and the trailer was abandoned. We got eight tires off the trailer, which were badly needed.

A few days later we received word from Company "A" concerning a German G.I. trailer which they planned to abandon. We made an agreement, to give the company four tires for the trailer.

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This trailer was the one we were looking for. It had a cargo capacity of a 2½ ton truck. After miscellaneous repairs, it was ready to roll. We then stored all the duffel bags and all but one-third of the gas masks. This trailer enabled us to take duffel bags and gas masks without shuttling them.

Our second problem concerned bridge timber and "I" beams. We had to keep a certain amount of these items in stock, in excess of our basic load. Now, the German trailer and our 2½ ton trailer, loaded to capacity, gave us three empty trucks. This helped us to haul the bridge timber and "I" beams without shuttling. As "I" beams became scarce, we stocked up on them as we came across them.

Our third problem dealt with supply space. Whenever we moved, very few persons realized the amount of space or area we needed for our supplies. The quartermaster failed to realize that not only do we handle the battalion supplies, but also, engineer supplies for the Division and attached units. This resulted in our supplies at one time being scattered in three towns. The problem was solved by checking areas before moving into them.

The fourth problem took into consideration supplies for the division units as well as the non-divisional units. The further east we moved, the farther away we got from the Engineer Depot. Although we have been able to make a trip almost every day for supplies, future trips will not take place as often until the Engineer Depot moves eastward from its present location. When we did receive supplies, units usually waited several days before picking them up. This caused us to carry all these supplies whenever we moved. Our decision to inform them via message about their supplies did some good, but not as much as we expected. Units are still lax in picking up their supplies.

Supplies should be mobile, simple, and flexible, in order to achieve success in any campaign. Few people realize that. Without the proper supplies at the right time front line troops would have little to fight with.

Recommendations: The following recommendations are made for next month in order to lessen our problems:

(1) That duffel bags of evacuated enlisted men be removed and contents therein disposed of according to regulations.

(2) That duffel bags now in storage on the trailer be further consolidated.

In handling duffel bags it was noted that many are practically empty. These should be placed together in one, making space for other equipment.

(3) Units should inform us immediately when government property is destroyed or lost in action. This will help us to replace it quicker for them, then if we have to ask or find out about lost equipment ourselves. Often several days elapse before we received word concerning destroyed or lost property. It has been noted that companies sometimes fail to requisition for those items through S-4, but inform S-3 only, of their shortages.

(4) Whenever units borrow supplies from S-4, they should give some report concerning these borrowed items after the lapse of several days. S-4 must know of their whereabouts and condition, in order that something can be done if a tactical situation arises requiring the immediate use of items borrowed.

Highlights of the various classes of supply during this month are:

CLASS I: Companies have been issued a three day reserve ration supply. This proves to be a great help whenever the companies move without informing us of their new location. With this reserve, companies are able to operate normally for three days, giving the supply office that much time to locate their whereabouts.

The water supply presents problems to solve every month. During the early part of this month, our four water points, located along the Moselle River, were supplying more water than those belonging to group.

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This was due to many Army and Corps units moving into bivouac areas near these water points, and rather than go back several miles to the one that formerly supplied them, they would come to our points for water.

This situation was solved by arranging with Group to locate their water points in certain areas to relieve the traffic upon our water points. This arrangement proved to be a great help.

About this time, numerous cases of dysentery were reported and part of the blame placed upon impure water. Repeated checks were made by Army personnel to determine the degree of bacteria. All the reports on our water points were favorable.

This constant check for bacteria resulted in our putting into effect the two-tank system as specified by Third Army Headquarters. The output using this system was approximately 12000 gallons per day.

Another problem concerning water points was locating them. Too many people tried to control their location. This resulted in misinformation and confusion as to the exact location of water points.

Plans were devised whereby the Engineer Supply Officer would coordinate the movements of the water points with G-4. The water points were given to the Combat Teams with the specific orders that the Engineer Line Companies would move them upon the approval of the Engineer Supply Officer. X

CLASS II: In Quartermaster items, overshoes, size 12, and boots rubber hip or knee size 12 and 13 are critical. This fact is holding up the complete filling of requisitions submitted previously for these items.

Four blankets have been issued each EM in lieu of sleeping bags which do not appear available for immediate issue, as had previously been hoped for.

In Engineer Supplies, plastic acetate, China marking pencils, and tape, scotch are very critical.

Among the Signal supplies considered critical are tubes, wire, and mast sections.

CLASS III: Gas, oil, and other lubricant supply is very good.

CLASS IV: "I" beams and bridge timber are not critical thus far. However, locations of any of these materials are few and far between. The nearest definite supply point is located along the Moselle River, which is a considerable distance away.

CLASS V: Among the critical items of ammunition were: Grenades, Rifle M17, Fuse Detonating M6A3, and Grenades, Hand Incendiary, M14,.

Edward F. Pacheco

EDWARD F. PACHECO
Captain, C of E
S - 4