

SECRETHEADQUARTERS
540TH ENGINEER COMBAT GROUP
APO 758 US ARMY

4 May 1945.

SUBJECT: S-3 Monthly Activity Journal for April 1945.

TO : Commanding Officer, 540th Engineer Combat Group, APO 758, US Army.

1 April 1945 - GRUNSTADT, Germany - The 540th Engineer Combat Group continued coordination and supervision of engineer work done by assigned and attached units. The 2832nd Engineer Combat Battalion continued maintenance of approaches to heavy ponton bridges at MANNHEIM and at WORMS, and of approaches to treadway bridge south of WORMS. Serviced maneuver cables for rafts. Erected 2 mine barrier cables at MANNHEIM. Placed 200 yards of double concertina at WORMS bridge, and 1000 yards of single concertina around wreckage of MANNHEIM bridge at water level. Assembled assault boats to be repaired, salvaged, or turned in. Maintained upstream defense. Continued water point at FRANKENTHAL. The 2833rd Engineer Combat Battalion closed ferry operations at 2030 hours. Continued patrolling river. Placed concertina around approaches to heavy ponton bridge north of WORMS. Checked and de-boobytrapped buildings for the 44th AAA Brigade Headquarters. Treadway bridge No. 2 was out at 1200 hours. The 85th Engineer Heavy Ponton Battalion maintained the heavy ponton bridges at WORMS and at MANNHEIM and checked vehicular traffic over same. The 1553rd Engineer Heavy Ponton Battalion maintained heavy ponton bridge No. 4 north of WORMS and treadway bridge No. 8 south of WORMS, checking vehicular traffic over same.

2 April 1945 - GRUNSTADT, Germany - The 2832nd Engineer Combat Battalion disassembled treadway bridge south of WORMS, 2 infantry support rafts, and one heavy ponton raft; continued hauling river-crossing equipment to Engineer Depot. Dismantled one mine-barrier cable, one ISR cable and one HPR cable. Continued patrolling river. The 2833rd Engineer Combat Battalion continued maintenance of approaches to the heavy ponton bridge north of WORMS. Hauled river-crossing equipment to dump. Disassembled one heavy ponton raft and 3 infantry support rafts. Maintained upstream patrol. The 85th Engineer Heavy Ponton Battalion continued maintenance of heavy ponton bridges at WORMS and MANNHEIM. The WORMS bridge was closed from 0855 to 0930 and from 1350 to 1410 to effect repairs (adjust nearshore hinge sill and replace damaged boat in farshore hinge span raft). The 1553 Engineer Heavy Ponton Battalion maintained the heavy ponton bridge north of WORMS; maintained the treadway bridge south of WORMS until 1000 hours, at which time the bridge was closed to traffic in order to be dismantled. Checked vehicular traffic over bridge. The 147th QM Battalion (Mobile DUKW) supervised the operation of the 829th Amphibian Truck Co, which continued transporting supplies across the RHINE River.

3 April 1945 - BURSTADT, Germany - Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 540th Engineer Combat Group, moved to BURSTADT. Continued coordination and supervision of engineer work done by assigned and attached units. The 2832nd Engineer Combat Battalion maintained approaches to the heavy ponton bridge in MANNHEIM. Dismantled treadway bridge south of WORMS and hauled material to Engineer Depot. Continued to maintain upstream defense. Closed water point at FRANKENTHAL at 1800 hours. The 2833rd Engineer Combat Battalion continued maintenance of approaches to heavy ponton bridge north of WORMS. Continued upstream patrol and river defense. Operated water point at OSTHOFEN. The 85th Heavy Ponton Battalion continued maintenance of heavy ponton bridges at WORMS and at MANNHEIM. The 1553rd Engineer Heavy Ponton Battalion continued to maintain the ponton bridge north of WORMS.

4 April 1945 - BURSTADT, Germany - All attached units were released at 1800B hours on Army order. The 2832nd Engineer Combat Battalion continued maintaining approaches to the heavy ponton bridge in MANNHEIM. Returned cable equipment from treadway bridge site to Engineer Depot. Battalion moved as follows: Headquarters and Headquarters & Service Company to LAMPERTHEIM;

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EXEMPT FROM AUTOMATIC DOWNGRADING AND
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Co "A" to SANDHOFEN; Co "B" to WALDORF; Co "C" to KIRSCHGARTHAUSEN. Made road, bridge, and railroad reconnaissance of newly assigned area. The 2833rd Engineer Combat Battalion moved as follows: Headquarters and Headquarters & Service Co moved to BIBLIS; Co "A" to ZWINGENBERG; Co "B" to HOFHEIM; Co "C" to ROHRSHHEIM. Maintained river guard and upstream patrol. The 85th Engineer Heavy Ponton Bn continued to maintain MANNHEIM and WORMS heavy ponton bridges. The MANNHEIM bridge closed from 0200 hours to 0215 hours to replace 2 broken balk and one split balk in one span of the bridge.

5 April 1945 - HEIDELBERG, Germany - Headquarters and Headquarters Co, 540th Engineer Combat Group, moved to HEIDELBERG. Continued coordination and supervision of engineer work done by assigned units. The 2832nd Engineer Combat Battalion moved as follows: Headquarters and Headquarters & Service Co moved to KIRCHHEIM; Co "A" moved to LEIMEN; Co "B" moved to WIESLOCH; Co "C" moved to KIRCHHEIM. Made road reconnaissance in new area. Closed water point in ROXHEIM and opened a water point in KIRCHHEIM. The 2833rd Engineer Combat Battalion moved as follows: Battalion Headquarters moved to HEJENHEIM; Headquarters & Service Co moved to HEIDELBERG; Co "A" moved to HEIDELBERG; Co "B" moved to HEIDELBERG; Co "C" moved to SORIESHEIM. Maintained roads in assigned area and continued RHINE River patrol and defense. Closed water point at OSTHOFEN and opened a water point at HEIDELBERG.

6 April 1945 - HEIDELBERG, Germany - The 2832nd Engineer Combat Battalion made road, railroad, and engineer material reconnaissance, maintained roads, and guarded engineer dumps in assigned area. The 2833rd Engineer Combat Battalion maintained approaches to treadway bridge over NECKAR River vicinity of MANNHEIM, and approaches to heavy ponton bridge approaches in HEIDELBERG. Maintained roads in assigned area; assembled German floating bridge equipment at ponton site at MANNHEIM.

7 April 1945 - HEIDELBERG, Germany - The 2832nd Engineer Combat Battalion continued maintenance of roads in assigned area; guarded German engineer dumps. Co "C" moved to REICHHARTSHAUSEN. The 2833rd Engineer Combat Battalion continued maintaining roads in assigned area, and approaches to treadway bridge vicinity of MANNHEIM and to heavy ponton bridge at HEIDELBERG. Continued hauling German floating bridge equipment to ponton bridge site at MANNHEIM. Co "C" moved to EBERFACH. Set up a water point in EBERFACH.

8 - 11 April 1945 - HEIDELBERG, Germany - The 2832nd Engineer Combat Battalion continued maintenance of roads in assigned area. Began construction of 2-way class 40, one-way class 70 highway bridge at SINSHEIM on 8 April 1945; completed 11 April 1945. The 2833rd Engineer Combat Battalion maintained treadway bridge and approaches vicinity MANNHEIM and ponton bridge and approaches at HEIDELBERG; maintained roads in assigned area, sweeping for mines where necessary; continued hauling German floating bridge equipment to ponton bridge site in MANNHEIM. Co "A" moved to vicinity of OFFENAU on 11 April 1945.

12 April 1945 - HEIDELBERG, Germany - The 2832nd Engineer Combat Battalion continued maintenance of roads in assigned area; reinforced highway bridge at WAIBSTADT; policed and destroyed German munitions along roads. The 2833rd Engineer Combat Battalion was relieved at 1000 hours of maintenance of treadway bridge vicinity of MANNHEIM and of ponton bridge in HEIDELBERG by the 344th Engineer (GS) Regiment. Headquarters and Headquarters & Service Co moved to GUNDELSHEIM; closed water point at HEIDELBERG and opened a water point at GUNDELSHEIM. Continued maintenance of roads in assigned area.

13 - 16 April 1945 - 4 KM East of AGLASTERHAUSEN, Germany (German Barracks) - Headquarters and Headquarters Co, 540th Engineer Combat Group moved to woods 4 km east of AGLASTERHAUSEN. Continued coordination and supervision of engineer work done by assigned units. The 2832nd Engineer Combat Battalion continued maintenance of roads in assigned area and police and destruction of German munitions. Co "A" moved to HEILBRONN on 15 April 1945. Began bridge over NECKAR River at HEILBRONN (assembling materials, etc).

2833rd Engineer Combat Battalion maintained roads and policed German munitions in assigned area. Started construction of 2-way class 40, one-way class 70 highway bridge over JAGST River, vicinity JAGSTFELD. Removed Schu-mines from vicinity of bridge at S-079709. Opened water point at NECKARZIMMERN. Closed water point at GUNDELSHEIM. Co "B" moved to OBERSHEFFLENZ on 16 April 1945.

17 - 22 April 1945 - NEUENSTADT, Germany - The 540th Engineer Combat Group moved to NEUENSTADT on 17 April 1945 and continued coordination and supervision of engineer work done by assigned units. Headquarters and Headquarters & Service Co, 2832nd Engineer Combat Battalion, moved to HEILBRONN on 17 April 1945. Continued maintenance of roads in assigned area. Began construction of highway bridge over NECKAR River at HEILBRONN on 17 April 1945. Closed water point in KIRCHHEIM and set up a water point in HEILBRONN on 17 April 1945. On 18 April 1945, Co "B" moved to FRANKENBACK. On 21 April 1945, a water point was set up in NEUENSTADT; Co "C" moved to NEUDENAU. The 2833rd Engineer Combat Battalion continued maintenance of roads in assigned area, guarding of German engineer dumps, and police of German munitions from area. On 17 April 1945, the assembling of materials was begun for bridge over KOCHER River vicinity of WALDAU. On 19 April 1945 - marked gap in minefield vicinity of bridge at WALDAU. On 20 April 1945 - completed bridge over JAGST River vicinity JAGSTFELD - 2-way class 40, 1-way class 70, 2 spans each 42 feet, 14 eighteen-inch I-beams per span, 20-foot roadway. On 21 April 1945, Co "B" moved to KENZELSAU and Co "C" moved to vicinity of OSTERBURKEN. On 22 April 1945, Co "B" moved to UTTEHOFFEN and Co "C" moved to WESTHEIM.

23 - 25 April 1945 - WELZHEIM, Germany - The 540th Engineer Combat Group moved to WELZHEIM on 23 April 1945 and continued coordination and supervision of engineer work done by assigned units, in close support of VI Corps. The 2832nd Engineer Combat Battalion continued maintenance of roads in assigned area, rendered engineer assistance to hospitals located within area, and guarded German engineer material and dumps. 23 April 1945 - closed water point in NEUENSTADT; Co "B" moved to SULZBACH. 24 April 1945 - relieved 2833rd Engineer Combat Battalion of water point in NECKARZIMMERN. 25 April 1945 - Hq and H & S Co moved to WELZHEIM; opened water point in WELZHEIM; completed 2-way class 40, 1-way class 70 highway bridge over NECKAR River at HEILBRONN; closed water point at HEILBRONN. 2833rd Engineer Combat Battalion continued maintenance, repair, and reconnaissance of roads in assigned area. Guarded engineer facilities policed up and destroyed German munitions. 23 April 1945 - Hq and H & S Co moved to MICHELFELD; began construction of highway bridge over the KOCHER River vicinity of WESTHEIM. 24 April 1945 - Co "C" moved to OTTENDORF and began construction of bridge over KOCHER River vicinity NIEDERNDORF; opened water point at MICHELFELD.

26 - 30 April 1945 - GOPPINGEN, Germany - 540th Engineer Combat Group moved to Goppingen; continued coordination and supervision of engineer work done by assigned units in close support of VI Corps. The 2832nd Engineer Combat Battalion continued maintenance and patrol of roads in assigned area. 26 April 1945 - Co "A" moved to SCHORNDORF; closed water point in NECKARZIMMERN; began construction of class 25 bridge for Army ASP at ADOLZFURT; began construction of 2-way class 40, 1-way class 70 highway bridge over KOCHER River vicinity of MUNSTER. 27 April 1945 - Co "A" moved to GAILDORF; opened a water point in GOPPINGEN. 28 April 1945 - completed 1-way class 25 bridge at ADOLZFURT - length 30 feet, 15-foot roadway. 29 April 1945 - Co "C" moved to ALBECK, 30 April 1945 - made road and bridge reconnaissance in newly assigned area; Co "C" moved to ALTENSTADT. 2833rd Engineer Combat Battalion continued maintenance, patrol and reconnaissance of roads in assigned area. 26 April - began construction of 2-way class 40, one-way class 70 bridge (highway) on Route 298 vicinity of UNTER ROT; opened water point at OTTENDORF. 29 April 1945 - bridge over KOCHER River vicinity of WALDAU opened to 1-way class 40 traffic. 30 April 1945 - completed construction of 2-way class 40, 1-way class 70 highway bridge on Route 298 vicinity UNTER ROT; hauled Bailey bridge equipment from bridge site vicinity WALDAU to engineer depot at GOPPINGEN.

S-3 Monthly Activity Journal for April 1945 (Continued)

1 - 30 April 1945 - GERMANY - The main duties of the S-3 Section during this period were as follows:

1. Preparation of Engineer Situation Report to Seventh Army Engineer Section.
2. Assignment and supervision of all work projects assigned to this Headquarters.
3. Maintained daily liaison with Army and Corps Engineers.
4. Issued 29 "Operations Instructions".
5. Issued "Operations Memorandums" on the following subjects:
 - a. No. 6 - "Disposition of Enemy Ammunition", 11 April 1945.
 - b. No. 7 - "Destruction of Signal Communications", 12 April 1945.
6. Issued "After Action Report" on RHINE River Crossing.
7. Dispatch of engineer equipment for operational purposes within the unit until this function was taken over by S-4 in 27 April 1945.


S. G. HARDEMAN
Captain, C.E.
S-3

HOUR	ENTRY	SOURCE
	<u>5 April 1945</u>	
1000	Col. Thomas VI Corps Engineer stated that a guide from Corps Engineer Unit will be at 540th Engineer CP to pick-up 1021 Engineer treadway bridge company	Liaison Officer VI Corps.
	<u>6 April 1945</u>	
1000	Found location of 344 Engineer (GS) Regiment and 2730 Engineer Light Equipment Company.	Liaison Officer 7th Army.
	<u>7 April 1945</u>	
1100	Notified 7th Army Engineer of German heavy ponton bridge equipment. Major Harrison stated to complete RR reconnaissance from HEIDELBERG to EBERBACH. Give all engineer data on reconnaissance	Liaison Officer to Army.
	<u>8 April 1945</u>	
1000	7th Army requested written report on status of treadway bridge left on site instead of hauling to E-214.	Major Harrison
1150	Major Casey requested road grader and air compressor.	Telephone
1200	Told Major Ferry to cancel work on German heavy ponton bridge	Telephone
	<u>9 April 1945</u>	
	Make reconnaissance of site for fixed bridge at JAGSTFELD & HEILBRONN	Lt. Col. Darling
	<u>10 April 1945</u>	
0735	Major Ferry request to move Co "A" GUNDELSHEIM.	Telephone
0945	Guide from 2832 Engr C Bn picked up message to get crane from 2730 Engr L.E. Co.	Person
1830	Lt. Col. Manning request information of all dump and hospital locations in assigned area.	Personal Call.
	<u>11 April 1945</u>	
1000	Engineer Section 7th Army request two (2) messengers daily when possible.	Liaison Officer to 7th Army.
1430	Contacted asst. S-3, 344th Engineer (GS) Regt. to relieve 2833 Engr C Bn from maintenance of treadway bridge and approaches at MANNHEIM (Neckar River) and approaches to heavy ponton bridge at HEIDELBERG, effective 120800B Apr.	Person

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HOOR	ENTRY	SOURCE
	<u>11 April 1945</u>	
1545	Traffic over bridge at SINSHELM (S-827732)	Tel. fr Maj. Casey
	<u>12 April 1945</u>	
	Inform battalions of cutting signal wires with bulldozers or demolitions.	Lt. Col. Manning
0815	Maj. Casey to Capt. Neville - Returning Road-Grader, Air Compressor and Crane to 2730 Engr L. E. Company.	Phone
0900	Lt. Lacey to Capt. Neville - Will remain at present CP until 1400 and will contact Gp Hq when he closes CP.	Phone
	<u>13 April 1945</u>	
1030	Maj. Casey to Capt. Neville - Requested permission to hold Road Grader one more day before sending it to Gp Hq for work - reason: new motor not broken in.	Phone
2100	Called Lt. Col. Darling and asked if he had 30 - 18" x 42' I-Beams.	Telephone
	<u>14 April 1945</u>	
1330	S-3, 36th Engr C Gp, called in reference of relieving his unit on jobs.	Telephone
1340	Send shovel operators, welding operators, and arc welders to 344th Engr (GS) Regt.	Lt. Col. Manning
	<u>15 April 1945</u>	
0745	Maj. Ferry wants to close Bailey bridge 1½ hours to jack-up bridge	Telephone
0750	Called Lt. Col. Darling in reference to closing Bailey bridge.	Telephone
0830	Called Lt. Col. Knapp relayed message to close Bailey bridge at 0001 hours on 16 Apr.	Telephone
1115	Maj. Brown proposed that each battalion design and submit plans for standard timber bridge to be carried by each battalion. S-3 to decide on final design and number of feet.	Person
1635	Received message from 2832nd Engr C Bn that guides were sent to pick-up Prime Mover and trailer from 2833rd Engr C Bn.	Message
	<u>16 April 1945</u>	
0930	Maj. Harrison called and said to start construction of HEILBRONN bridge immediately	Telephone

HOUR	ENTRY	SOURCE
	<u>16 April 1945</u>	
1045	Lt. Lacey to Capt. Neville - Civilian foreman at NECKARZIMMERN ball-bearing plant passed on a request by an unknown Col. for 20 more men to go to work and also that they should remove the electric conducts from tunnels.	Phone
	Capt. Neville to Lt. Lacey - Continue as per our work order. Also will you submit minefield report on minefield at S-079709.	Phone
1140	Maj. O'Brien - asked about light line, and location of 2730 Engr L.E. Co - he wants to use lights on HEILBRONN bridge job. Also asked about removal of treadway bridge at NECKARELZ.	Person
1600	To 2832 Engr C Bn - Corps said OK on lights at HEILBRONN but to check with 100th Division.	Phone
	<u>17 April 1945</u>	
1100	Notified Maj. O'Brien to put in water point at HEILBRONN.	Person
1400	Capt. Stephens to Capt. Neville - Will remove Bailey bridge over JAGST River at JAGSTFELD between 0001-0600 19 Apr. At the same time, will jack-up Bailey over KOCHER River vicinity WALDAU. Wants clearance on both.	Phone
	<u>18 April 1945</u>	
1300	Capt. Neville to Capt. Stephens - OK to remove Bailey at JAGSTFELD and jack Bailey at WALDAU.	Phone
	<u>19 April 1945</u>	
0900	Capt. Neville to Lt. Col. Darling at VI Corps - What shall we do with Bailey being removed from JAGST River at JAGSTFELD? Lt. Col. Darling - leave it stacked on site.	Phone
1045	Maj. Casey to Capt. Neville - Want one Road Grader. Also need signal people at Bridge site in HEILBRONN. Capt. Neville to Maj. Casey - OK on road grader, send guide.	Phone
1050	Capt. Neville to Capt Lee at VI Corps - Will you send signal people to bridge site at HEILBRONN? Let me know time.	Phone
1600	Maj. Harrison (Cadet) to Capt. Neville - Is sending Work Order and plans for PW enclosure at HEILBRONN; also sending Capt. Lovelace (TC) to go with one of our officers to make estimate on railhead work at HEILBRONN (on 20 Apr) Submit estimate to Army Engineer as soon as possible.	Phone

HOOR	ENTRY	SOURCE
	<u>19 April 1945</u>	
1835	Capt. Neville to Maj. Harrison at Cadet - 2832nd Engr C Bn wants welders back from 344 Engr (GS) Regt. - Answer - No.	Phone
	<u>20 April 1945</u>	
0800	Maj. Harrison called saying cannot release operators and welders from 344 Engr (GS) Regt.	Telephone
0900	Capt. Stevens called and stated that the Bailey bridge over JAGST River was pulled and Bailey bridge over KOCHER River was jacked-up.	Telephone
	<u>21 April 1945</u>	
1000	Place guards on power plant. Maintain road from HALL to GAILDORF. Contact 51st Evacuation Hospital and give engineer assistance.	Lt. Col. Darling
1115	Maj. O'Brien to Capt. Neville - asked: (1) About railhead job at HEILBRONN - Answer - to be done by 1175 Engineers. (2) When liquor guards at HEILBRONN would be relieved - Answer - On 21 or 22 April by 7th Army security. (Answers received by phone from Capt. HARDEMAN at Cadet).	Person
1400	Capt. Neville left to contact 344 Engr (GS) Regt to ask for Quickway Crane for HEILBRONN bridge job. Contacted Maj. Ralston, S-3, and he said he might be able to give us one on 23 April. Also arranged for his unit to relieve our guards on cement plant at OBERGIMPERN at 221500B April. Visited 2730 Engr L.E. Co. at FRANKENTHAL, and asked for 2 - 20Ton trailers with Prime Movers. Also gave us 24-hour leeway on 1,000 mile inspections, if operationally necessary. Stopped at 2833 Engr C Bn Hq to notify them that they would receive 2 Prime Movers and trailers on 22 April.	Person
	<u>22 April 1945</u>	
0930	Pull guards from German engineer dump at NECKARSULM.	Tel fr Maj Harrison
0945	Capt. Neville notified S-3, 2832nd Engr C Bn that 344 Engrs would relieve his guards on cement factory at 1500 hours.	Message
1035	Water point at NECKARMMENGINN would like relief by Army.	Tel Maj Trigg

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HOUR	ENTRY	SOURCE
	<u>23 April 1945</u>	
	Corps will move tomorrow to prearranged location.	Tel fr Lt. Col. Darling.
	<u>25 April 1945</u>	
1330	Maj. Harrison at Cadet said he wanted 24-hour notice on opening of all bridges. Water point at NECKARZIMMERN will be relieved by 1514 Engr WS Co. on 26 April. We will get our welders back from 344th Engineers today.	Person
	<u>27 April 1945</u>	
1330	Lt. Col. Manning notified us that S-4 would take over dispatching of light equipment to battalions.	Person
	<u>28 April 1945</u>	
1100	MUNSTER bridge job is Army Work Order #425. 2731st Engr L. E. Co. is at M-9452. Location of Engineer Dumps: E-217 - CRAILSHEIM - Class IV E-218 - HEIDENHEIM - Class IV E-219 - ULM - Bailey E-220 - DONAWORTH - Bailey.	Person Maj. Harrison Lt. Col. Gaynor
	<i>S. G. Hardeeman</i> S. G. HARDEMAN Captain, C.E. S-3	

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