

Secret

HEADQUARTERS
III CORPS

FEBRUARY 1945



*After
action
report*

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S E C R E T

HEADQUARTERS III CORPS
Office of the Commanding General
APO #303, U. S. Army

* S E C R E T *
* AUTH: CG, III CORPS *
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1 March 1945

SUBJECT: Action Against Enemy, Reports After.

THRU : Commanding General, First US Army, APO 230, U. S. Army.

TO : The Adjutant General, Washington 25, D. C.

Section I - Introduction.
Section II - Narrative of Operations.
Section III - Summary of Operations.
Section IV - Intelligence Summary.
Section V - Supply and Evacuation Summary.
Section VI - Personnel Summary.
Section VII - Civil Affairs Summary.
Section VIII - Engineer Summary of Operations.
Section IX - Signal Summary of Operations.

*Annexes:

1. Operations Maps 1 a through 1 f.
2. Engineer Operations Maps 2 a through 2 d.
3. Supply and Evacuation Maps 3 a and 3 b.
4. Signal Operations Maps 4 a and 4 b.
- * 5. After Action Report, Hq & Hq Btry, III Corps Arty,
w/1 Incl. (Incl withdrawn and forwarded separately.)
- * 6. Roster of Officers, Hq III Corps.
- * 7. Station Lists.

SECTION I - INTRODUCTION

1. Authority: This After Action Report is submitted in compliance with paragraph 10 (Change 3) AR 345-105. It is the third report of its kind submitted by this headquarters, and covers the period 1 February 1945 through 28 February 1945.

2. Command: From 1 February through 10 February the III Corps, commanded by Major General JOHN MILLIKIN, was a part of Lieutenant General George S. Patton's Third United States Army. From 11 February through 28 February the Corps was a part of Lieutenant General Courtney H. Hodges' First United States Army.

*Annexes 5, 6 and 7 are not included in this edition.

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3. Composition of the Corps:

On 1 February III Corps was composed of the following units: (Major changes in attachments are discussed in Section II - Narrative of Operations. A complete record of changes and units in support of Corps are found in Annex No. 7 - Station Lists.)

Hq and Hq Co, III Corps

DIVISIONS

6 Armd Div (- Co C, 15 Tk Bn)
777 AAA AW Bn (SP)
603 TD Bn (SP)
642 QM Trk Co
3803 QM Trk Co
Co C, 3 Cml Bn
3 Plat, 16 Field Hosp

17 A/B Div
507 Precht Inf Regt
550 Abn Inf Bn
Co A, 3 Cml Bn
Co C, 15 Tk Bn (6 Armd Div)
*184 Engr C Bn
*398 QM Trk
1st Plat, 623 Med Clrg Co
2 Plat, 16 Field Hosp

CAVALRY

6 Cav Gp (Mecz)(Reinf)
6 Cav Rcn Sq
28 Cav Rcn Sq
Co C, 602 TD Bn (SP)
Co B, 293 Engr C Bn
1255 Engr C Bn (-Co C)

ARTILLERY

III Corps Arty, Hq/Hq Btry
288 FA Obsn Bn
183 FA Gp
177 FA Bn (155 How)
253 Armd FA Bn (105 How Sp)
696 Armd FA Bn (105 How Sp)

ANTIAIRCRAFT ARTILLERY

32 AAA Gp, Hq/Hq Btry
468 AAA AW Bn (SP)
Btry A&B, 119 AAA Gun Bn (M)

CHEMICAL

3 Cml Bn (Mtz)(-Co's A & C)

ENGINEERS

961 Engr Maint Co (-1 Plat)
2942 Engr TIT
Map Depot
Map Reprod Det
1123 Engr C Gp
178 Engr C Bn
188 Engr C Bn
280 Engr C Bn
996 Engr Trdwy Br Co (-1 Plat)
1 Plat, 632 Engr LE Co
1 Plat, 513 Engr L Pon Co
1137 Engr C Gp
145 Engr C Bn
*183 Engr C Bn
249 Engr C Bn
513 Engr L Pon Co (-1 Plat)
632 Engr LE Co (-1 Plat)
*770 Engr Dp Trk Co
1 Plat, 996 Engr Trdwy Br Co

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ARTILLERY cont'd.

193 FA Gp
179 FA Bn (155 How)
257 FA Bn (155 How)
776 FA Bn (155 How)
203 FA Gp
176 FA Bn (4.5 Gun)
514 FA Bn (155 Gun)(Trac)
731 FA Bn (155 Gun)(Trac)

MILITARY POLICE

MP Plat (Corps)
821 MP Co (Corps)

QUARTERMASTER

*2 Plat, 23 QM Car Co
*3456 QM Trk Co

SIGNAL

94 Sig Bn

TANK DESTROYER

8 TD Gp, Hq/Hq Co (Atchd
Corps Arty)

* Denotes Colored Personnel.

MEDICAL

182 Med Bn, Hq/Hq Det
414 Med Coll Co
467 Med Coll Co
624 Med Clrg Co (-2 Plat)
2 Plat, 624 Med Clrg Co
(Supporting 6 Cav Gp)
Hq 16 Field Hosp

G-2 ATTACHMENTS

IPW Team 114
IPW Team 118
MII Team 413-G
CIC Det 203
CIC Det 223
OB Unit 36
PI Team 57
PI Team 72
PI Team 84

G-3 ATTACHMENTS

Air Support Party

ADM UNITS

3 Spec Serv Co
38 Fin Disb Sec
92 Fin Disb Sec
48 MRU (Type Y)
202 APU

4. Situation, 1 February: During the latter part of December III Corps attacked to the North from the vicinity of Arlon, Belgium, and effected a junction with the 101 A/B Div (Reinf) which had been surrounded in Bastogne at the time of the great German "Ardennes" offensive. After several days of hard fighting the Corps, attacking in conjunction with the First US Army and the VIII and XII Corps, Third US Army, forced a German withdrawal to the East, and at the end of January had reached the high ridge which lies between the Clerf and Our Rivers. Here the Corps was ordered to halt and maintain an "aggressive defense", prepared to attack to the east on Army order.

See Annex No. 1a, Map:
Situation as of 010600 Feb.

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The enemy, with the exception of a few scattered patrols operating west of the Our River, had been driven into his Siegfried Line defenses, from which he appeared content to place light artillery fire in the Corps zone, improve his defensive positions, and send occasional patrols across the Our River. His long prepared positions were situated in mountainous terrain ideally suited to defense, and the Our river to his front afforded him additional natural protection.

To the left of III Corps was the VIII Corps and to the right was the XII Corps. In the III Corps sector the 6 Armd Div was on the left, the 17 A/B Div in the center, and the 6 Cav Gp on the right. The situation and dispositions of the Corps are shown in Annex 1a, Map: Situation as of 010600 Feb.

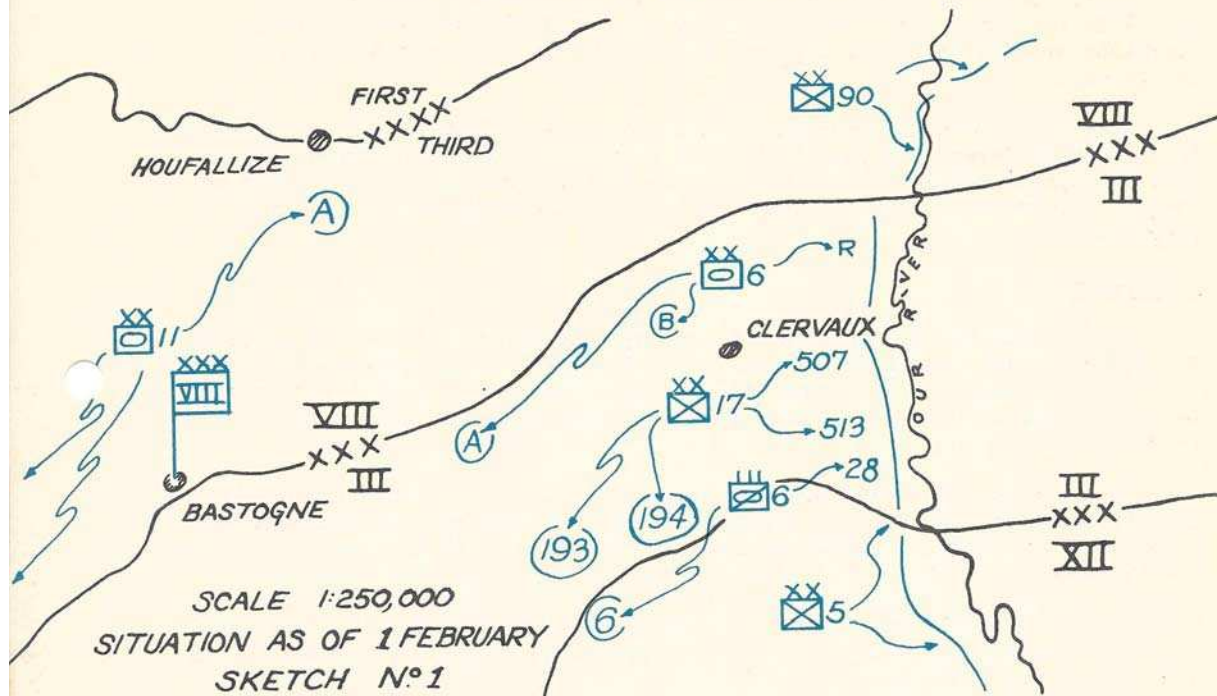
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SECTION II, AFTER ACTION REPORT

NARRATIVE OF OPERATIONS



LUXEMBOURG AND BELGIUM

*1 February:

Corps maintained and improved its defensive positions and aggressively patrolled to and across the Our river. The 6 Armd Div reconnoitered the river banks for possible crossing sites and the 17 A/B Div and 6 Cav Gp continued to encounter light and scattered resistance from enemy who had infiltrated to the west side of the river.

RCT 134, (35 Inf Div) which had been relieved from attachment, departed from the Corps area, and the 1255 and 184 Engr C Bns were attached III Corps. Corps in turn attached the 1255 Bn to the 6 Cav Gp, and the 184 Bn to the 17 A/B Div.

Warm weather and light rains prevailed and no missions were flown by supporting aircraft.

Corps artillery fired on targets of opportunity.

* See Annex 1a, Map: Situation as of 010600 Feb.
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2 February:

Corps continued to maintain and improve its defensive positions and patrol to the Our River. Enemy activity consisted of a few small patrols operating west of the river and some artillery fire which was received late in the day.

During the morning a reconnaissance mission was flown by the one squadron in support of Corps, but poor visibility throughout the day prevented any further employment of air support. Artillery activity was limited to firing on targets of opportunity and maintaining a light harassing and interdiction program.

3 February:

Corps continued to maintain its defensive positions and to send patrols to and across the Our River. Occasional artillery fire was received during the day, but otherwise the enemy was inactive. Corps artillery fired on targets of opportunity and maintained a light harassing and interdiction program.

Instructions were received from Army which (1) changed both the northern and southern Corps boundaries, increasing the Corps sector from approximately seven miles in width to approximately eighteen miles in width, and (2) relieved the 696 Armd FA Bn (105 How), 3 Cml Bn, and 280 Engr C Bn from attachment to Corps. Accordingly, Corps established new zones for its three major components and directed that (1) the 6 Armd Div relieve elements of the 90 Inf Div (VIII Corps) and extend its left to the new northern Corps boundary, (2) the 17 A/B Div relieve the 6 Cav Gp, and (3) the 6 Cav Gp relieve elements of the 5 Inf Div (XII Corps) and extend its right to the new Corps southern boundary. (New boundaries are shown in Annex 1b, Map: Situation as of 090600 Feb.)

The reliefs and reorganization necessitated by these instructions were begun late in the day. The 194 Gli Inf, 17 A/B Div, relieved the 6 Cav Gp, and the 6 Cav Gp began the relief of the 10 Inf, 5 Inf Div (XII Corps).

For the third day the weather continued warm and cloudy with intermittent light rains. The squadron of fighter bombers assigned to Corps was unable to fly any missions.

4 February:

Corps continued its defensive mission, and patrolled to the Our River. The reliefs begun on 3 February were completed, and by midnight the Corps had completely occupied its new sector. The 6 Armd Div by late afternoon completed the relief of elements of the 90 Inf Div in its zone and the 6 Cav Gp completed relief of the 5 Inf Div by 2400, at which time the new Corps boundaries were placed in effect.

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FO #4, Hq III Corps, was published. It confirmed the boundaries which had been established on the preceding day, and announced that Third Army was to continue the attack with the VIII and XII Corps, while the III Corps continued to maintain an "aggressive defense". Essentially, its provisions were (1) that the three major Corps units patrol to and across the Our River, (2) that they prevent enemy infiltration west of the Our River, (3) that they prepare plans to cross the Our River, and (4) that they be prepared to attack northeast or east to the Kyll River.

The weather continued warm, with light rains. No missions were flown by supporting aircraft, and Corps artillery continued to fire on targets of opportunity.

5 February:

Corps continued to maintain its defensive positions and sent patrols to the Our River. The enemy was again inactive, although patrols in the zone of the 17 A/B Div received small arms fire from the east bank of the Our River, and scattered light artillery fire fell in the Corps zone. During the night flare activity was observed in the southern portion of the Corps zone.

The weather continued warm with light rains. Nearly all the snow and ice by this time had disappeared from the ground.

No missions were flown by the supporting aircraft. Corps Arty continued to fire on targets of opportunity and maintained a light harrassing and interdiction program.

6 February:

Corps maintained its defensive positions and patrolled to and across the Our River. The weather continued warm, and although visibility was poor the squadron of fighter bombers in support of Corps bombed DASBURG (vP8562) and BOLLENDORF (WLO240). Artillery activity continued light.

Operations Directive No. 1 (Reference FO #4) confirming fragmentary orders already issued, was published. Essentially, it provided that each division on the night 6-7 Feb execute reconnaissance in force east of the Our River, with not to exceed one Inf Bn. The 6 Armd Div was given as its objective the high ground vicinity vP859670 - vP863666; the objective of the 17 A/B Div was to be the high ground vicinity vP856638, vP863630, and vP864616. The 6 Cav Gp was instructed to be prepared to cross Our River on Corps order.

By midnight elements of the 9 Armd Inf Bn and the 44 Armd Inf Bn (6 Armd Div) were in position on the west bank of the river, and the 2 Bn 507 Para Inf had begun to cross.

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7 February:

During the night 6-7 February both the 6 Armd Div and the 17 A/B Div began their crossings of the Our River. By 0330 the 507 Prcht Inf had crossed E and F Cos, which received some small arms fire from Dasburg (VP8562), and by 0800 the 6 Armd Div had crossed Co C of the 9 Armd Inf Bn vicinity VP851651. High water caused by the rains and melting snows of the past several days made crossing operations difficult, but dense fogs assisted in achieving surprise.

In the initial stages of the crossing the 6 Armd Div met little resistance. Small amounts of small arms fire were received, and light mortar and artillery fire fell in the Div zone. By noontime, however, the 6 Armd Div reported receiving heavy mortar and artillery fire. The 17 A/B Div received somewhat lighter opposition, which consisted primarily of long range small arms fire.

By nightfall the 6 Armd Div had thrown foot bridges across the river at VP850682 and at VP844604, and the 44 Armd Inf Bn was completely across the river vicinity VP859684. No further elements of the 17 A/B Div crossed this day, but the 3 Bn 507 Prcht Inf moved up to occupy positions west of the river which had been held by the 2 Bn. At the close of the day, therefore, there were three small bridgeheads in the Corps zone--two in the zone of the 6 Armd Div and one in the zone of the 17 A/B Div. The 44 Armd Inf Bn was completely across the river; elements of the 9 Armd Inf Bn and the 2 Bn, 507 Prcht Inf had crossed.

Information was received that the 17 A/B Div was to be relieved from attachment to III Corps, and that the 1255 and 284 Engr C Bns were to be attached.

No missions were flown by supporting aircraft because of poor weather conditions.

8 February:

The 6 Armd Div continued to expand and consolidate its bridgeheads on the East side of the Our River against increasing resistance. Although rising waters hampered bridging operations - at midnight 7 Feb it was reported that the river had increased 15 feet in width during the past 24 hours - the 6 Armd Div established a third foot bridge vicinity VP850682 during the morning. This bridge was short lived, however, as enemy artillery fire knocked it out shortly after it had been placed in operation.

Preparations were made for the construction of a Bailey Bridge at VP850673; during the late morning and early afternoon approaches were built and a small bridgehead was established at that location. The 9 Armd Inf Bn completed its crossing during the late afternoon, and plans were made to effect a junction between the 9 and 44 Armd Inf Bns. The 44 Armd Inf Bn encountered numerous booby traps and requested flame throwers for employment against pill boxes, some of which appeared to be unmanned, but many of which offered resistance.

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The 507 Para Inf made no attempts to send troops across the river, although one platoon from the 513 Para Inf crossed, and withdrew after receiving two counterattacks. Information was received from Army that the 17 A/B Div would depart from the Corps zone on the 10th and that the 1252 and 284 Engr C Bns would arrive in the Corps zone on the 9th. It was planned by Corps to attach these Engr C Bns to the 6 Armd Div, which was to relieve the 17 A/B Div.

Restricted visibility again prevented the aircraft in support of Corps from taking to the air, and Corps Arty continued to maintain counterbattery and harassing and interdiction programs.

* 9 February:

The 6 Armd Div continued to consolidate and enlarge its bridgeheads, and at 1600 the 9 and 44 Armd Inf Bns had established contact with each other. A counterattack during late afternoon was repulsed by the 9 Armd Inf Bn. The Bailey Bridge was completed and placed in operation during the afternoon, and armored elements of the Div began to cross the River. By the day's end 1 Co of tanks, 2 Platoons of TD's, and 2 Rcn Trs had crossed to the East side. By the day's end, also, the 6 Armd Div had four footbridges and 2 ferrying sites in operation in addition to the Bailey Bridge.

In the zone of the 17 A/B Div the 3 Bn, 507 Inf relieved the 2 Bn, and the 184 Engr C Bn (attd 6 Armd Div) prepared to relieve the 513 Para Inf.

Operations Directive #2 (Ref FO #4), confirming fragmentary orders already issued, was published. It established new boundaries occasioned by the departure of the 17 A/B Div from Corps control, and announced a new III - VIII Corps boundary. Essentially, it directed that (1) the 6 Armd Div relieve the 17 A/B Div in place prior to 111800A, (2) the 6 Armd Div continue its reconnaissance in force east of the Our River, (3) the 6 Cav Gp (Reinf) continue present mission, and (4) the 17 A/B Div assemble in rear of zone, upon relief by 6 Armd Div, prepared to move from Corps area by rail and motor. The 184 Engr C Bn, Co B 603 TD Bn, 2 Plat 16 Field Hosp and 1 Plat 623 Med Ctrg Co were relieved of attachment to 17 A/B Div; and the 1252 Engr C Bn, 284 Engr C Bn, 184 Engr C Bn, Co B 603 TD Bn, and 161 Cml Co (SG) were attached to the 6 Armd Div.

The weather continued warm with light rains, and visibility was restricted by clouds. Corps Artillery activity continued to be light, and no missions were flown by supporting aircraft.

10 February:

The 6 Armd Div continued to consolidate and expand its bridgehead. The 50 Armd Inf Bn relieved the 44 Armd Inf Bn, at which time CCB assumed command of the bridgehead, and the 44 Armd Inf Bn began the relief of the 507 Pch Inf.

At approximately 1300 the Bailey bridge which had been placed in operation the day before was reported out of action because of damage caused

* See Annex No. 1b, Map: Situation as of 090600 Feb.

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by a dozer in crossing. The 161 Chemical Co (SG), which arrived in the Corps area during the day, was relieved of attachment from the 6 Armd Div and attached to the 1123 Engr C Gp. The 513 Prcht Inf departed from the Corps zone.

During the late afternoon information was received from CG, Third US Army that III Corps was relieved from assignment to Third US Army and assigned to First US Army. Corps was directed to move to the zone of the XVIII Airborne Corps on the following day, and the Corps Headquarters prepared to move to ZWEIFALL, GERMANY, (VK9536) early on the morning of the 11th. Army directed that shoulder patches and bumper markings were to be either covered up or removed, that radio silence would be observed, and that road signs and guides with tactical markings would not be used.

The day continued warm with rains during the morning.

11 February:

6 Armd Div continued to enlarge and consolidate its bridgehead, and relief of the 17 A/B Div continued. CG 6 Armd Div assumed command of the zone of the 17 A/B Div at 0950.

At 102400 command of the III Corps zone passed to the VIII Corps, and early in the morning of the 11th III Corps advance detachment moved to SPA in accordance with instructions received from CG, Third US Army. The Corps Tac CP prepared to move on the morning of the 12th.

12 February:

Corps Tac Headquarters moved to ZWEIFALL and prepared to assume command of the XVIII Corps (Airborne) zone in compliance with instructions received from CG, First US Army. It was agreed by the CG's III and XVIII Corps that command of the zone would pass to CG, III Corps, at 1800 on the following day.

First Army's Letter of Instructions dated 11 Feb directed (1) that upon assumption of command by III Corps the 1 Inf Div, 78 Inf Div and 82 A/B Div would be attached III Corps, and (2) that III Corps be prepared to attack across the Roer River in zone on D-Day, H-Hour (boundaries assigned III Corps are shown in Annex No. 1c, Map: Situation as of 14 Feb.) It was understood that the 9 Armd Div, upon its arrival in the Corps area, would also be attached III Corps.

The Corps staff began to make plans for the transfer of command and for the accomplishment of this new mission.

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GERMANY

A - Situation:

At the time III Corps arrived on the First Army scene and assumed command of the zone of the XVIII Corps (Airborne) the enemy had been driven into his well prepared defenses east of the Roer River. The Roer, with the commanding hills on its eastern banks, was the first key terrain feature guarding the level terrain known as the Cologne Plain, which stretched eastward to the Rhine.

To the Corps front the system of reservoirs and dams had been so damaged by the enemy that the river had reached flood stage, with abnormally swift currents. The discharge valves of the huge earth filled Schwammenauel Dam (wF085274), which formed a reservoir containing approximately 100,700,000 cu. meters of water, had been demolished, and the conduit which furnished water to the Heimbach power station from the Urfttalsperre Reservoir had been ruptured. The tremendous amounts of water flowing through these ducts, plus the heavy rainfall, had transformed the normally slow current into an unfordable torrent and for many days patrols found it impossible to cross the river. Because of this factor the attack of First Army, originally scheduled for 10 February, was to be postponed four times, and 13 valuable days were to be made available to the enemy to improve his positions.

Beyond the Roer, the Erft River with its many streams and tributaries and canals, and the lake district between Erft and Cologne threatened to be the greatest natural obstacles. Otherwise, the terrain offered many avenues of approach with good roads leading to all principal cities.

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B - Composition of the Corps:

At 1800, 13 February, when command of the zone passed to CG III Corps, the Corps was composed of the following units:

Hq and Hq Co III Corps.

DIVISIONS

1 Inf Div
103 AAA AW Bn
634 TD Bn (3" SP)
745 Tk Bn
193 FA Bn (25 Pdr)
965 FA Bn (155 How)
299 Engr C Bn
1 Plat, 276 Engr C Bn
LE Plat, 72 Engr L Pon Co
1 Plat, 994 Engr Trdwy Br Co
90 Cml Bn (-Co "C")

82 A/B Division
634 AAA AW Bn (-Btry D)
509 Precht Inf Bn
254 FA Bn (155 How)
400 Armd FA Bn (105 How)
629 TD Bn (3" SP)
666 QM Trk Co
Co C, 90 Cml Bn

78 Inf Division
552 AAA AW Bn
893 TD Bn (SP)
774 Tk Bn
987 FA Bn (155 G SP)
(-Btry "C")

CAVALRY

14 Cav Gp
18 Cav Sq
32 Cav Sq

ARTILLERY

III Corps Arty, Hq/Hq Btry
290 FA Obsn Bn
211 FA Gp
240 FA Bn (155 G)
528 FA Bn (155 G)
401 FA Gp
264 FA Bn (8" How)
809 FA Bn (155 How)

ENGINEERS

2942 Engr TIT
Map Depot
1111 Engr C Gp
51 Engr C Bn
291 Engr C Bn
300 Engr C Bn
501 Engr L Pon Co
629 Engr LE Co (-1 Plat)
994 Engr Trdwy Br Co (-1 Plat)
Co B, 738 Tk Bn (Mine Exploder)
1159 Engr C Gp
276 Engr C Bn (-1 Plat)
284 Engr C Bn
72 Engr L Pon Co (-LE Plat)
1 Plat, 629 Engr LE Co

MEDICAL

187 Med Bn, Hq/Hq Det
484 Med Coll Co
2 Plat, 662 Med Clrg Co

MILITARY POLICE

MP Plat (Corps)
821 MP Co

QUARTERMASTER

*2 Plat, 23 QM Car Co
3 Plat, 203 QM Car Co

SIGNAL

94 Sig Bn
3259 Sig Serv Co
Co C, 54 Sig Bn
153 Liaison Sq

* Denotes colored personnel.

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ARTILLERY cont'd.

408 FA Gp
259 FA Bn (4.5" Gun)
667 FA Bn (155 How)

ARMORED

9 Armd Gp, Hq/Hq Co

ANTI-AIRCRAFT ARTILLERY

16 AAA Gp, Hq/Hq Btry
109 AAA Gun Bn (90)
563 AAA AW Bn (40)

ADM UNITS

38 Fin Disb Sec
92 Fin Disb Sec
48 MRU (Type Y)
202 APU

G-2 ATTACHMENTS

IPW Team 114
IPW Team 118
IPW Team 119
MII Team 413-G
CIC Det 203
PI Team 139
OB Unit 36
PI Team 57 (DS First US Army)
PI Team 72
PI Team 84 (DS III Corps Arty)

G-3 ATTACHMENTS

Air Support Party

13 February:

The 1st Inf Div, 82 A/B Div, and 78 Inf Div maintained defensive positions and patrolled to the Roer River.

A draft of a proposed field order, published for planning purposes, announced that Corps was to attack on D-Day and H-Hour, and established new boundaries for the 1st Inf, 82 A/B, and 78 Inf Divs. It further directed that the 1st Inf and 82 A/B Divs relieve those elements of the 32 Cav Rcn Sq which were then in their respective zones. (Division boundaries assigned are shown in Annex lc, Map: Situation as of 142400 Feb.)

The reliefs were accomplished, and the 32 Cav Rcn Sq began its movement to the 14 Cav Gp assembly area in the vicinity of GEY (WFO739). The 14 Cav Gp was relieved from attachment to 1 Inf Div.

The remainder of the forward echelon, III Corps, moved to RAEREN, (VK857323).

* 14 February:

Corps continued to maintain defensive positions, effected minor reliefs of front line units, and patrolled to the Roer River. The 1 Inf Div attached TF Davisson (Hq 634 TD Bn plus TD, Rcn, Tk, and Med units) to the 26 Inf, and it was given a sector to defend. Both the 1 Inf and 82 A/B Divs found it impossible to send patrols across the river because of the swift current, which at places reached a velocity of 10 - 12 miles per hour.

* See Annex No lc, Map:
(Situation as of 14 Feb.)

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The enemy continued to place light harrassing artillery and mortar fire in the Corps sector, and in the sector of the 82 A/B Div greater enemy activity was observed. It appeared that more defensive positions were being occupied.

Corps artillery continued to support operations, principally by counterbattery fire, and the IX TAC flew armed reconnaissance missions. The day was clear and warm.

The 987 FA Bn (-Btrys A and C) (155 G (SP)) was attached to the 1 Inf Div, and Btry A was attached to the 82 A/B Div. The boundary between the 82 A/B Div and the 78 Inf Div (as established by draft of field order on 13 Feb) was changed to give the road Simmerath (vK9824) - Strauch (wF0128) Schmidt (wF0629) to the 78 Inf Div.

15 February:

Corps maintained its defensive positions and patrolled to the Roer River, but no crossings were made because of the swift current. The enemy continued to improve his defensive positions, and placed light artillery and mortar fire in the Corps zone.

Corps Artillery fired counterbattery, harrassing and interdiction missions. No air missions were flown in direct support of Corps.

The weather continued clear and warm. The remainder of the forward echelon, Hq III Corps, closed in ZWEIFALL. The rear echelon, Hq III Corps closed in RAEREN.

16 February:

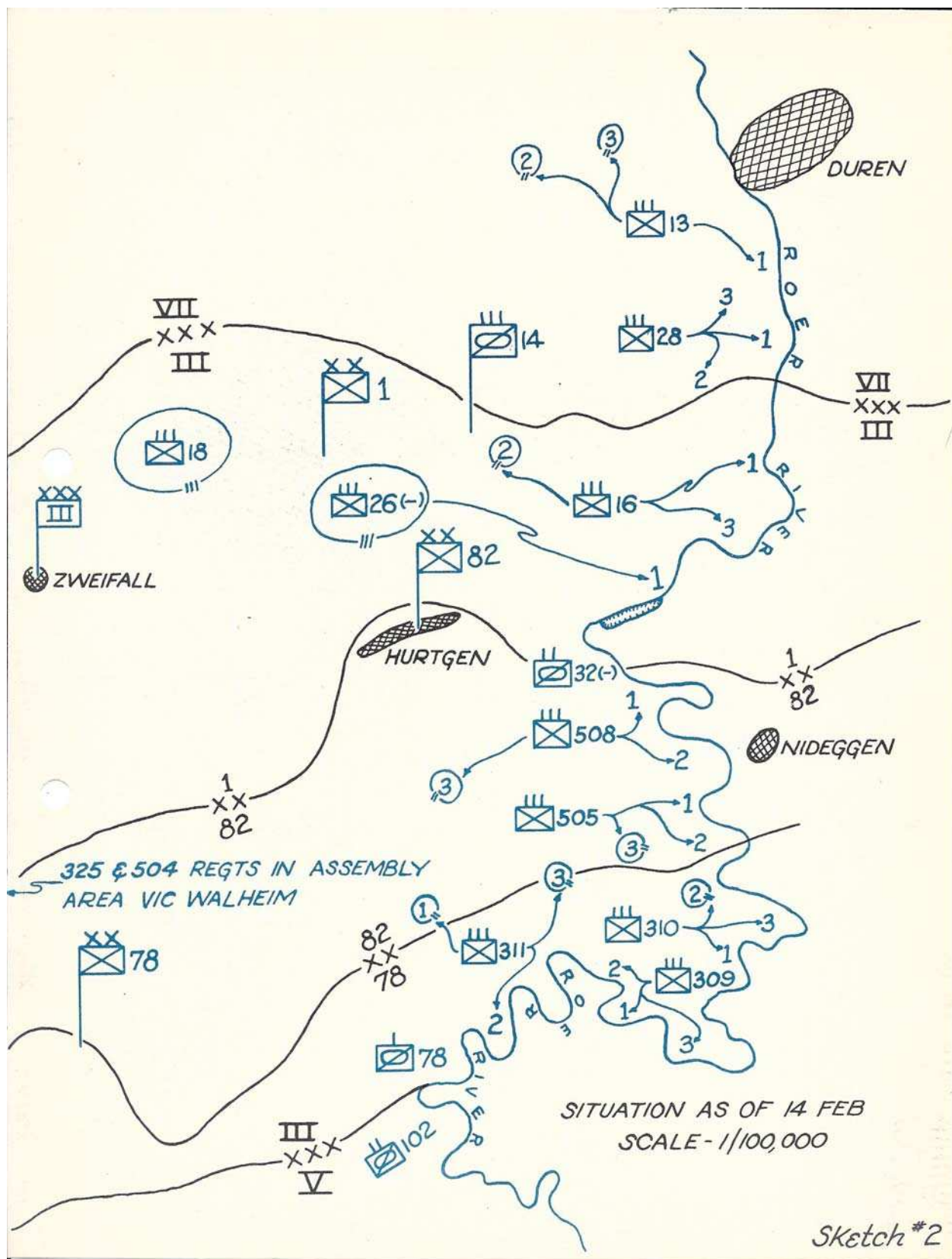
Corps maintained its defensive positions and patrolled to the Roer River. Attempts by patrols to cross the river failed, however, because of the swift current in which assault boats were overturned or became uncontrollable. The enemy continued to improve his defensive positions, and displayed a reluctance to occupy open positions or move about in the open, probably because of his fear of our artillery fire. He continued to place mortar and light artillery fire in the Corps zone.

Corps Artillery continued to fire counterbattery and light harrassing and interdiction programs. No missions except Armd Rcn were flown by the IX TAC.

FO #5, Hq III Corps, which announced an attack to take place on D-Day and H-Hour, was published. (D-Day and H-Hour were dependent on the time at which the VII Corps attacked, which in turn was dependent on the condition of the Roer River.

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III Corps attack was to follow the VII Corps attack by 2 days.) Its provisions were essentially as follows: The 1 Inf Div was directed to establish a bridgehead in its zone; to be prepared to pass one battalion through the bridgehead of the 8 Div (VII Corps) and then attack south to capture KREUZAU (wFl239); to continue attack NE in zone; and to be prepared to pass the 9 Armd Div or the 18 Cav Rcn Sq through its bridgehead. The 82 A/B Div was directed to attack and establish a bridgehead in its zone; to continue attack NE in zone; and to be prepared to pass 6 Armd Div, 78 Inf Div, or 14 Cav Gp through its bridgehead. The 78 Div was directed to make vigorous demonstrations, to include artillery fire, smoke, and audible movements; and to be prepared to pass through the bridgehead of the 82 A/B Div. The 14 Cav Gp (Reinf) was directed to (1) be prepared to cross ROER River in bridgehead established by 82 A/B Div on Corps order and protect Corps right (South); and (2) be prepared to cross 18 Cav Rcn Sq across ROER River in bridgehead established by 1 Inf Div on Corps order to protect Corps left (North) and maintain contact with VII Corps. The 401 FA Gp, consisting of the 809 FA Bn (155 How) and the 264 FA Bn (8" How) was placed in general support and directed to reinforce the fires of the 1 Inf Div; the 408 FA Gp, consisting of the 667 FA Bn (155 How) and the 259 FA Bn (4.5" Gun) was placed in general support of the Corps in the zone of the 82 A/B and 78 Inf Divs; the 211 FA Gp, consisting of the 240 FA Bn (155 G), was placed in general support, as was the 290 FA Obsn Bn.

The weather continued clear, although visibility during the afternoon was restricted by overcast.

17 February:

Corps maintained its defensive positions, and the 82 A/B Div was successful in sending one patrol across the Roer River. Enemy activity was negligible, and consisted only of improving defensive positions and placing light artillery fire in the Corps zone. Corps Artillery continued its counterbattery and harrassing and interdiction program.

Information was received from Hq First US Army that the date of the attack, which had been scheduled for the 19th, was postponed until the 25th. This postponement, the third, was again necessitated by bad roads and the condition of the Roer River.

The 82 A/B Div was relieved from attachment III Corps, and the 9 Inf Div (V Corps) was attached. Operations Directive No. 1 (Ref FO #5) was published. It provided that the 9 Inf Div relieve the 82 A/B Div in its zone, and that the mission assigned the 82 A/B Div in FO #5 be assigned to the 9 Inf Div. The 82 A/B Div was directed to assemble rear of Corps zone upon completion of relief. The following organizations were relieved from attachment 82 A/B Div: 254 FA Bn, 400 Armd FA Bn, 634 AAA AW Bn (less Btry D); 629 TD Bn (SP); 987 FA Bn (less Btrys A and C); Co C 90 Cml Bn; Co B, 774 Tk Bn.

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The 254 FA Bn (155 How), the 400 Armd FA Bn (105 How (SP)), the 987 FA Bn (less Btrys A and C) (155 Gun (SP)) and Co C 90 Cml Bn were attached 9 Inf Div. Co B of the 774 Tk Bn reverted to control of 78 Inf Div, the 629 TD Bn (SP) was attached 401 FA Gp, and the 634 AAA AW Bn (less Btry D) was attached to 16 AAA Gp. Hq and Hq Co 90 Cml Bn reverted to Corps control, and the following units were attached 1159 Engr C Gp: 299 Engr C Bn; LE Plat, 502 LP Co; 3 Tankdozers; Co B, 738 Tk Bn; Plat, 994 Engr Trdwy Br Co; 10 Amphibious Trucks (DUKW).

During the night the 60 Inf (9 Inf Div) closed in the Corps area and began the relief of elements of the 82 A/B Div.

Light rains prevailed throughout the day and poor visibility prevented air activities.

18 February:

Corps maintained its defensive positions, and during the night 18-19 Feb both the 1 Inf Div and 78 Inf Div succeeded in sending patrols across the Roer River. Enemy activity continued to be confined to the improvement of defensive positions, and placing light Arty fire in the Corps zone.

The 9 Inf Div (-RCT 39) closed in the Corps area and by 2210 had completed relief of the 82 A/B Div, at which time command of the zone passed to CG, 9 Inf Div. The 82 A/B Div began its movement to assembly areas vicinity of WALHEIM (VK8935), preparatory to departing for SISSONE (O-2215).

During the day Corps Arty continued its counterbattery and harrassing and interdiction fires. Light rains fell throughout the day, and poor visibility prevented air operations.

* 19 February:

Corps maintained its defensive positions. The enemy continued to improve his positions and placed scattered artillery fire in the Corps zone. Corps Arty continued its counterbattery and harrassing and interdiction program, and the IX TAC flew armed reconnaissance missions. The day was warm and clear.

The 325 Glider Inf and 504 Para Inf departed from the Corps zone and other elements of the 82 A/B Div assembled in the vicinity of WALHEIM preparatory to departing on the 20th and 21st.

20 February:

Corps continued to maintain defensive positions, and all three divisions succeeded in sending patrols across the river, but all patrols received small arms fire and were unable to penetrate enemy positions. The enemy continued to improve his defensive positions and his artillery fire continued to fall in the Corps zone.

*See Annex No 1d, Map:
Situation as of 192400.

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The 82 A/B Div continued to depart from the Corps area and information was received from V Corps that the 2 Bn, RCT 39 (9 Inf Div) would probably arrive in III Corps zone late the 21st, with the remainder of the regiment following within a day or two. Light rains fell throughout the entire day and restricted visibility prevented air operations. Corps Arty continued its program of counterbattery and harrassing and interdiction fires.

21 February:

Corps maintained its defensive positions and patrolled to and across the Roer River. The enemy continued to improve his positions and placed artillery fire in the Corps zone. Corps Arty continued its program of counterbattery and harrassing and interdiction fires.

The 2 Bn, RCT 39, closed in the 9 Div area and the advance party of the 9 Armd Div reported to Corps Headquarters. The day was clear and cooler.

22 February:

Corps continued to defend and patrol to the Roer River. Enemy activity again consisted of improving defensive positions and placing light Arty fire in the Corps zone. Corps Arty continued to fire counterbattery and harrassing and interdiction missions.

RCT 39 (9 Inf Div) closed in the 9 Div area and the 82 A/B Div cleared the Corps area. 629 TD Bn (SP) was attached to VII Corps and III Corps received in return the 817 TD Bn (T).

The day was warm and clear and the IX TAC flew armed reconnaissance.

23 February:

Corps continued its defensive mission and patrols of the 9 and 78 Inf Divs crossed the Roer River. On its left (north) the VII Corps launched its long awaited attack and met with considerable success. Elements of nine battalions crossed the river early in the morning and initially met little opposition, the greatest difficulty encountered having been the swift current. III Corps prepared to attack on the 25th, according to plan.

The advance CP of the 9 Armd Div opened in Sprimont (vK5315) and elements of the division began to assemble in that area. The 817 TD Bn which had been attached to III Corps arrived in the Corps area.

The day was warm and clear and the IX TAC flew armed reconnaissance missions. Corps artillery continued its counterbattery fires, and assisted in the artillery preparation for the attack of the VII Corps.

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Operations Directive No. 2 (Ref FO #5) confirming fragmentary orders already issued, was published. Essentially, it provided that (1) the Corps would advance division rear boundaries to the forward bank of the Roer River, upon request of the division commander, in order to relieve division commanders of responsibility for road maintenance and traffic control; (2) the 9 Armd Div was attached III Corps effective 22 February and the following units were attached 90 Div as of that date: 482 AAA AW Bn (SP), 656 TD Bn (SP), 3458 and 3600 QM Trk Cos; (3) 4 Co 12 Bn Fusiliers (Belgian) was attached 78 Inf Div; (4) 8 TD Gp was attached III Corps upon arrival vicinity RAEREN (vK8032); and (5) the 998 Engr Tr Br Co was attached 1159 Engr C Gp.

24 February:

Corps maintained its positions, and patrols of the 78 Div succeeded in crossing the Roer River. Corps Artillery fired heavy counterbattery, harrassing, and interdiction missions and fired a counterflak program in coordination with V Corps Artillery. The attack of the VII Corps was supported by interdiction fire.

In the north the VII Corps' attack continued to progress satisfactorily, but in the zone of the 8 Inf Div, bridges which were to be used by elements of 1 Inf Div were not placed into operation as early as had been hoped. It appeared that it would become necessary to delay slightly the III Corps attack, scheduled for 250100, until these bridges were placed in operation.

In the zone of the 78 Div, receding waters in the reservoir formed by the Schwammenauel Dam revealed a combination bridge and causeway between (wF083275) to (wF078274). The 78 Div was instructed to take steps to protect the bridge, but the enemy succeeded in destroying it on the following morning.

9 Armd Div closed in assembly areas vicinity SPRIMONT (vK5113).

Operations Directive No. 3 (Reference FO #5), confirming fragmentary orders previously issued, was published. Essentially, its provisions were as follows: (1) The 1 Inf Div was instructed to cross two Inf Bns over the Roer River in bridgehead established by 8 Inf Div (VII Corps), and capture KREUZAU (wF1239). It was further instructed to be prepared to pass elements of the 9 Inf Div through its bridgehead. (2) The 9 Inf Div was instructed to be prepared to pass elements through the 1 Inf Div bridgehead, at a time and using a route agreed upon by the Div Commanders concerned. (3) The 78 Inf Div was instructed to make the demonstration referred to in FO #5, on Corps order. (4) The 9 Armd Div was directed to be prepared to move to the vicinity of WALHEIM (vK9035) on Corps order. (5) The 8 TD Gp was made responsible for the security of Corps rear areas, and the 281 FA Bn (105 How) and the 2 Co 12 Bn Fusiliers (Belgian) were attached. (6) The following units were relieved from attachment 1 Inf Div and attached 1159 Engr C Gp:

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299 Engr C Bn; Plat, 276 Engr C Bn; Plat, 994 Engr Treadway Br Co; Plat, 502 Engr LP Co; 3 Tk Dozers; 10 DUKW's.

25 February:

At 0800 elements of the 16 Inf, 1 Div, began passing over the 8 Inf Div bridges, encountering no difficulty. By noontime the 2 and 3 Bns were in NIEDERAU (wF1241), in position to attack, supported by 1 Co of TDs, 1 Co of Tks, and AT guns. The attack met moderate resistance, and by nightfall KREUZAU (wF1239) had been cleared, and the 3 Bn had reached STOCKHEIM, (wF1440) where it was halted by dug-in enemy. The 1 Bn 16 Inf, using 1 Inf Div bridge, crossed the river during the early afternoon, attacked south from KREUZAU, and by nightfall had driven approximately 1500 yards south of that place. Late in the afternoon elements of the 26 Inf were moved forward, and its 3 Bn crossed the river through 8 Inf Div bridgehead and closed in NEIDERAU, preparatory to attacking on the 26th. The 2 Bn, 26 Inf closed in KREUZAU during the night.

During the day 2 foot bridges and 1 support bridge were placed in operation in the 1 Inf Div zone, and construction was begun on a Bailey bridge. The Div arranged with the 8 Div (VII Corps) to take over the town of STOCKHEIM, and the Corps boundary was temporarily changed to include that town in III Corps.

The 78 Div sent two patrols across the Roer. The 8 TD Gp closed in the Corps area, as did the 817 TD Bn, and the 629 TD Bn cleared the Corps area.

The day was clear and colder.

The IX TAC flew armed rcn missions, and attacked enemy artillery positions. Corps artillery supported Corps operations by firing counterbattery, harrassing, and interdiction missions.

* 26 February:

Corps continued its attack to expand its bridgehead, and made good progress against moderate resistance. The enemy defended from scattered strong points, some of which offered heavy resistance; his artillery activity was light, although there was a considerable increase in mortar fire.

In the zone of the 1 Inf Div, the 3 Bn, 26 Inf moved south from NIEDERAU (wF1241) and attacked south and captured UDINGEN (wF1137) against light resistance. At approximately 0900 the 16 Inf received a counterattack, consisting of an estimated company of infantry supported by four tanks, southeast of DROVE (wF1337), but the counterattack was stopped by 1000.

* See Annex No 1e, MAP:
Situation as of 26 Feb.

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The 16 and 26 Inf continued their attack to the east and southeast and by the end of the day had captured LEVERSBACH (wF1036), RATH (wF1035), BORTH (wF1235) and SOLLER (wF1637). The 1 Bn 18 Inf relieved elements of the 8 Div (VII Corps) at STOCKHEIM (wF1440) and at 1715A the boundary change between the VII and III Corps became effective. The remainder of the 18 Inf closed in STOCKHEIM late in the day, prepared to attack in the morning.

A Bailey bridge vicinity KREUZAU (wF1239) was completed at 1700 and a treadway bridge at UDINGEN at 1915.

The 39 Inf (plus 1 Bn 60 Inf), 9 Inf Div, crossed the ROER RIVER over 1 Inf Div bridges and closed in assembly area vicinity BOICH. The 78 Inf Div maintained its defensive positions, and the 14 Cav Gp and 9 Armd Div remained in assembly areas.

The day was cool with intermittend light rains. The IX TAC flew armed reconnaissance missions, and Corps Artillery supported the attack with counter-battery and heavy interdiction fires. TOT's were fired on enemy strong-points, and attached TD's were given interdiction missions.

27 February:

The Corps attack continued to make good progress, with the 1 Inf Div advancing up to 5 miles, and with the 9 Inf Div attacking through the 1 Inf Div bridgehead. Enemy opposition continued to be moderate, and towns and isolated strong points were the principal centers of resistance. No counterattacks were launched, and enemy artillery fire was again moderate although heavy mortar fire was received.

The 1 Inf Div continued its attack to the east during the night 26-27 February and early in the day the 1 Bn 18 Inf cleared JAKOBSMULLESHEIM (wF1741), and the 1 Bn 16 Inf captured FRANGENHEIM (wF1737). The 3 Bn 16 Inf attacked at 1100 and captured VETTWEISS (wF1938). Because the enemy east of JAKOBSMULLESHEIM was well organized and in strength, elements of the 18 Inf moved north through the zone of the 8 Inf Div (VII Corps) and attacked south in the direction of HOCHKIRCHEN (wF2244), while other elements of the regiment attacked from the west and south and captured KELZ (wF1941) and IRRESHEIM (wF2144).

At 0400, the 39 Inf (Reinf), 9 Inf Div, attacked to the south from the bridgehead of the 1 Inf Div and encountered stubborn enemy resistance. THUM (wF1434) was captured early in the day, and NIDEGGEN was cleared in the afternoon after very heavy fighting. Construction was started of a Bailey Bridge across the ROER RIVER in the vicinity of NIDEGGEN.

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The 78 Inf Div continued to maintain its defensive positions. The 9 Armd Div was directed to move across the ROER over 1 Inf Div bridges on 28 February, and the 14 Cav Gp was ordered to move to assembly areas vicinity DROVE (wF1337), and was given the mission of reconnoitering and protecting the Corps south flank. The Group closed in its new area at 2300.

Brigadier General T. C. THORSON, G-3, First US Army, visited Corps headquarters during the day, with instructions which changed the boundary between the V and III Corps. (Boundary is shown in Annex No. 1f, Map: Situation as of 28 Feb.)

There was intermittent rain during the day, and no missions were flown by IX TAC. Corps artillery supported Corps operations with interdiction and counterbattery fires. Attached TD's were given interdiction missions.

* 28 February:

The Corps advance this day met stiffened enemy resistance, particularly on the south flank, and heavier artillery fire was received along the entire front. The 1 Inf Div cleared NORBENICH (wF2346), HOCHKIRCHEN (wF2244), LUXHEIM (wF2242), and GLADBACH (wF2241), and as the division advanced its south flank became exposed, because of strong enemy resistance in front of the 9 Inf Div and 14 Cav Gp. The 32 Cav Rcn Sq was therefore attached 1 Inf Div late in the afternoon.

The 9 Inf Div continued its attack to the south and southeast and HURTH (wF1333) and BERG (wF1432) were cleared. A Bailey bridge and an infantry support bridge were completed vicinity wF093335.

The 78 Inf Div maintained its defensive positions west of the ROER, and the 311 Inf crossed the river through the bridgehead of the 9 Inf Div. The regiment attacked south during the afternoon and advanced up to 2000 yards.

CCB of the 9 Armd Div moved to SOLLER (wF1637) and at 1730 attacked to the south. The remainder of the division moved to assembly areas east of the ROER.

The 14 Cav Gp began to move southeast from DROVE at 0715, but encountered strong resistance west and south of THUM (wF1734) where it was forced to halt.

Operations Directive No. 4 (Ref. FO #5) confirming fragmentary orders already issued, was published. It established new boundaries between 9 Inf Div and 78 Inf Div and assigned an axis of advance to the 9 Armd Div. Essentially, it directed that (1) the 1 Inf Div continue attack to NE;

* See Annex No. 1f, MAP:
Situation as of 28 Feb.

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(2) the 9 Inf Div attack NE in zone to seize ZULPICH (wF2333) and crossings over ERFT River; (3) the 78 Inf Div attack South and establish division bridgehead, continue advance east in zone, and protect Corps south flank; and (4) CCB, 9 Armd Div, attack 28 Feb and CCA attack 1 March. The 400 Armd FA Bn was relieved from attachment to 9 Inf Div and attached to 9 Armd Div; Co B, 893 TD Bn was relieved from attachment to 78 Inf Div and attached to 14 Cav Gp; and Co A, 299 Engr C Bn was relieved from attachment to 1159 Engr C Gp and also attached to 14 Cav Gp. The 667 FA Bn (155 How) was relieved from attachment to 408 FA Gp and attached to 9 Armd Div, and 742 FA Bn (8" How) was attached to 408 FA Gp upon arrival in Corps zone.

The day was cloudy with poor visibility. One mission was flown in close support of the 9 Armd Div by IX TAC.

Corps Artillery supported Corps by counterbattery fires, reinforced by fires of the 32 FA Brigade.

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SECTION III, AFTER ACTION REPORT

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

Although for the greater part of February III Corps was assigned a defensive mission about which there was little of particular interest, the developments of the latter part of the month which culminated in the attack across the Roer River are worthy of examination because of the problems encountered and the technique employed in overcoming them.

The mission of the Corps was to attack to the east across the Roer River two days after the Ninth Army and VII Corps launched their attacks, in order that III Corps might protect VII Corps right flank. Because of the flood conditions of the river and the nature of the terrain east of the river, a crossing in the III Corps zone not only presented tremendous problems, but the ultimate success of such an undertaking was questionable. If small patrols found it extremely difficult to make the crossing it was obvious that large scale forced crossings would be well nigh impossible. Consequently every known possibility and every known method was examined, and the ideal solution was finally determined to be an envelopment which could secure a bridgehead without the necessity of a frontal assault across the river.

To the North of the Corps zone the nature of the terrain and the condition of the river gave greater promise of success to a river crossing operation. Because the attack of the VII Corps was to precede the III Corps attack by two days, the possibility of using a VII Corps bridgehead presented itself, and consequently elements of the 1 Inf Div were passed through that bridgehead, attacked to the South, and in a short time secured a bridgehead in the zone of the 1 Inf Div. Upon construction of 1 Inf Div bridges, the 9 Inf Div passed elements over these bridges to attack south and establish a bridgehead in the zone of the 9 Inf Div; and the 78 Inf Div then crossed elements through the 9 Inf Div zone to attack south and establish a bridgehead in the zone of the 78 Inf Div.

As a result, each of the three Inf Divs was enabled to establish its bridgehead without the excessive casualties and great loss of time attendant upon a frontal assault. The method employed was dependent on the establishment of one bridgehead initially, but it demonstrates well the exploitation to the fullest extent of that one bridgehead when cooperation is given and coordination effected among the units concerned.

The success of the Corps attack, which by the end of the month had pressed 13 km to the Neffel River, was in a large measure a result of this crossing technique which made possible the rapid crossing of large amounts of personnel and material.

ROER RIVER

Area South of original III Corps sector, showing Mariawald, subsequently taken by 78th Division.



ROER RIVER
Boundary between III and V Corps



ROER RIVER
Bridgesite at Heimbach



HEIMBACH

27

II

HASENFELD

ROER RIVER
Bridgesite at Nideggen

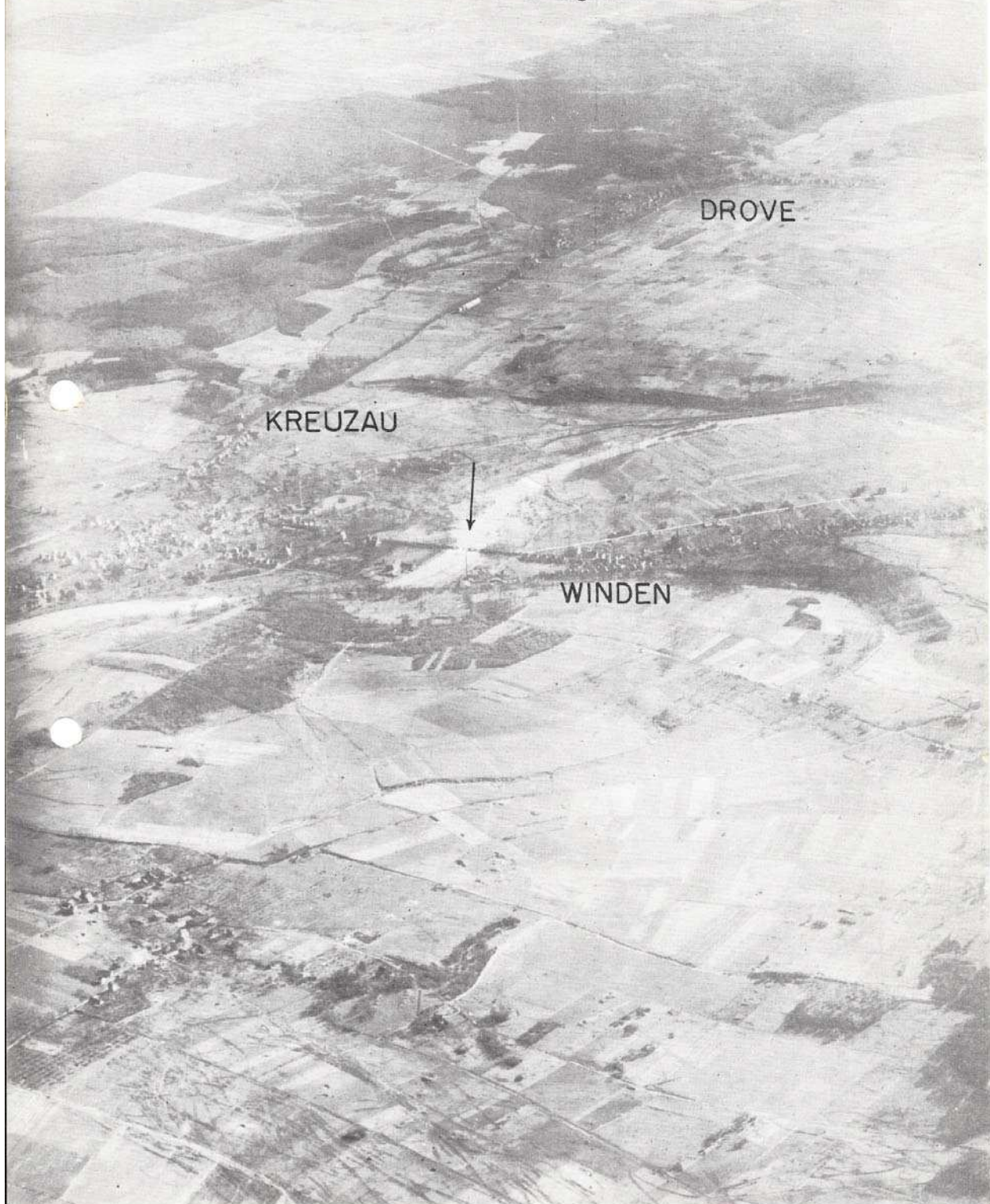
THUM

NIDEGGEN





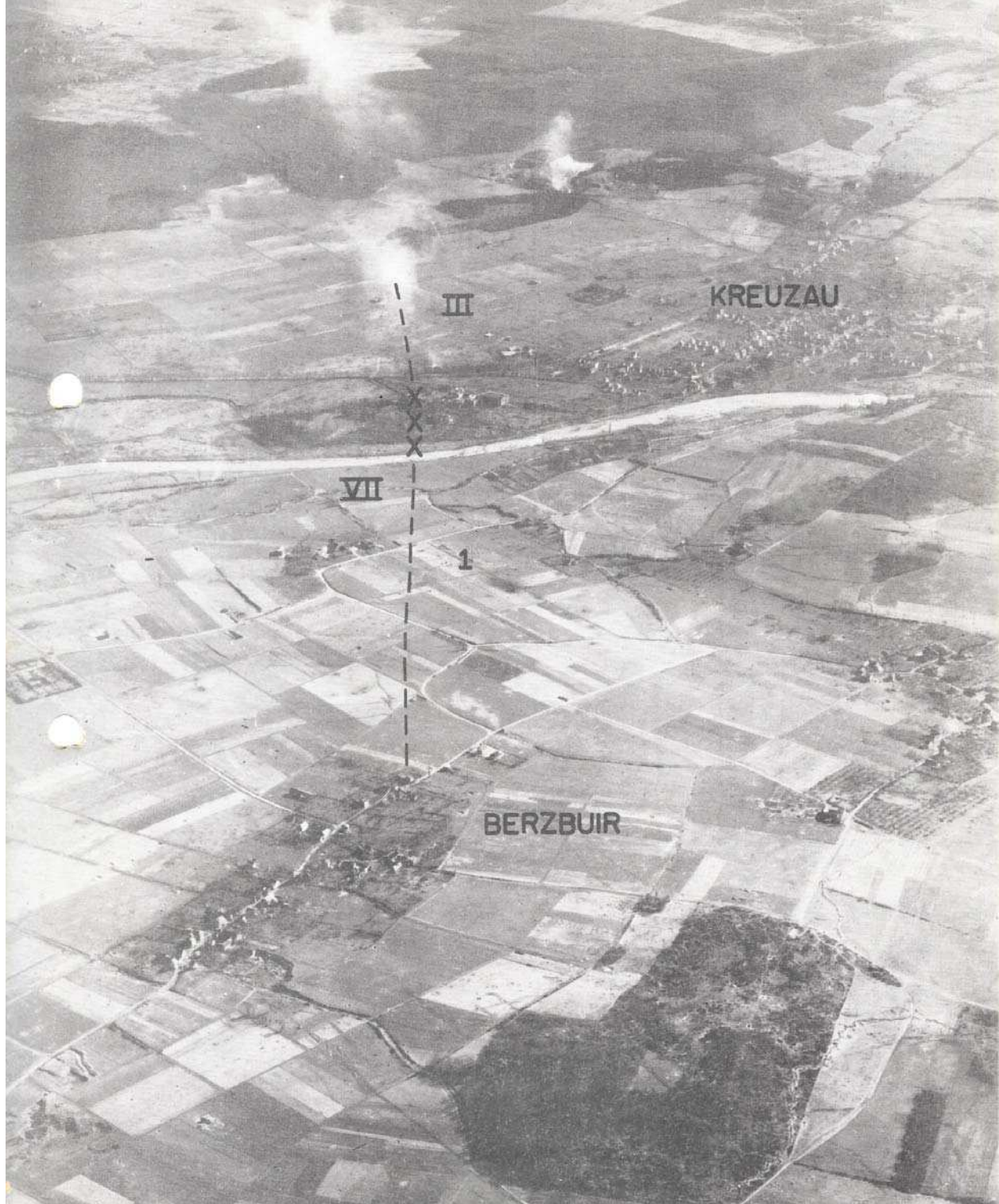
ROER RIVER
Kreuzau-Winden Bridgesite



ROER RIVER
Bridgesite at Blens



ROER RIVER
Boundary Between III and VII Corps



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Although the technique sounds relatively simple, the intricate problems of logistics inherent in such an operation required careful planning. In each case, shortly after a division had established its bridges and before it had completely crossed, infantry elements of another division were moving through its area and moving over its bridges. Consequently, the success of the entire operation was dependent on the careful timing of troop movements and close coordination among all units. The successful manner in which it was handled is evidenced by the rapidity of the advance, which by the end of the month had carried the Corps well into the Cologne Plain.

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SECTION IV, AFTER ACTION REPORT

SUMMARY OF ENEMY ACTIVITY

PART ONE : Narrative

PART TWO : Enemy Order of Battle

PART THREE: Analysis of Prisoners of War

PART ONE -- Narrative

1. OUR River Phase

In December and January the Corps, attacking from south of BASTOGNE, drove the enemy in its zone out of the ARDENNES salient and east across the OUR River. By 1 February 1945 the enemy held only two towns on the west bank of the OUR, RODERSHAUSEN and EISENBACH, with small forces.

All the enemy divisions opposing the Corps in early February had participated in the ARDENNES campaign, and suffered accordingly; and were incapable of any strong offensive action. Since the enemy had committed all his reserves on the western front in that offensive he was not estimated to have offensive capabilities until given time to refit and reorganize. Only two capabilities were estimated to be within enemy power--to defend the Siegfried line and harass our troops with strong patrols, or to leave a skeleton force in the Siegfried and withdraw the bulk of his forces behind the RHINE River.

A remarkably passive defense was all that the enemy was able to accomplish in early February along the OUR in III Corps sector. Opposing forces were separated generally by the river, which was in flood at that time from an early thaw. Even so, enemy patrolling was very light, and limited to small reconnaissance parties; no aggressive patrols were reported, and no aggressive ground action was undertaken by the enemy, even after our crossings of the river early 8 February. Several small towns immediately west of the river, in which neither force cared to stay for long, changed hands several times, usually without opposition. The enemy clung to that part of VIANDEN (P9050) west of the river, however.

US river crossings of 8 February were undertaken during darkness and heavy fog along the river, and were apparently undetected and unopposed. There was practically no reaction other than defensive to the crossings by enemy infantry, who generally stayed in their Siegfried pillboxes pulling triggers. Moderately heavy

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mortar fire was received on bridge sites from time to time, but artillery fire was not heavy on the bridges or on the bridgehead areas. Only two half-hearted counter-attacks, or demonstrations, were undertaken against the bridgeheads, and neither achieved contact with our infantry.

Enemy artillery fire was very light throughout the period 1-10 February; 300 rounds received 3 February was the heaviest reported. Average for all other days was 100-150 rounds, mostly of light caliber, and principally from single guns. The fire was largely of harassing nature, on towns and roads between the CLERF and OUR Rivers.

There was no enemy air activity reported during the entire period 1-10 February.

2. ROER River Phase

On the ROER River 13 February the Corps came to another sector where opposing forces were divided by another, larger, river in flood, this time caused as well by the German's blowing of the locks of SCHWAMMENAUDEL Dam (FO827) as by the weather. Here, similarly, the enemy had recently been pushed back across the river, and his divisions were not in good shape, but because of the barrier imposed by the river they were able to reinforce and regroup in relative security. No bridges remained intact, and the swift current and high water were a serious obstacle to any boat crossing.

Because of the difficulty of crossing patrols, identifications of enemy units were dated prior to 10 February, while enemy forces were still fighting west of the river. It was supposed that the same order of battle still existed, and that divisions opposing the Corps, from north to south, were elements of 353 VG Division, 85 Infantry Division, 3 Para Division, and elements of 272 VG Division. Because of the lack of infantry reinforcements available to the enemy it was not felt that any major change in order of battle would take place on the Corps front, although there was some likelihood of a shift of 353 slightly north to meet US VII Corps attack. Also the exact status of 85 Infantry Division and 3 Para Division was a cause of some inquiry soon after 13 February, and a strong possibility existed that one had been absorbed by the other, with the probability that 3 Para Division would emerge the stronger.

There was relatively little enemy ground activity observed east of the ROER River from 13-25 February. Visibility generally was not good, and on days when the enemy could be observed, friendly air was overhead, and the enemy took care to keep his movements to a minimum. Patrolling by either force was sharply restricted by the state of the river, and the enemy showed little aggressiveness in this respect. Thus his activity was limited mainly to mortar and artillery fire, and some air activity, apparently principally for reconnaissance purposes.

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Artillery fire from 13-17 February was generally light, but increasing daily, with most fires being received on roads, towns and observation posts near the river, principally in the southern portion of the Corps zone. After 17 February the shelling varied from day to day, 400-600 rounds daily, sometimes heavier on the north, but more often on the south of the zone. Mortar fire increased during the month, particularly in the zone of the 1st US Inf Div on the north.

Friendly patrols were able to cross the river with great difficulty on 18 February and after, though the swift water, and inundated wire and enemy mines made the crossings hazardous and cost time, so that few deep penetrations could be made. The usual patrol report was that no contact was made and trenches and houses close to the river were found unoccupied and apparently unused; however, deeper patrol penetrations usually encountered s/a fire from alert outposts. Enemy patrolling was very light.

VII US Corps crossed the MOER River to our north early 23 February; no noticeable change took place on the III Corps front in reaction to their attack. The night of 24-25 February, 1st US Inf Div moved through the 8th US Inf Div bridgehead to its north, and attacked south at 1200A, 25 February.

The 1st US Inf Div's attack met moderate resistance from a surprised enemy, which peered west across the river as our smoke enveloped their positions and our infantry attacked from the north. KREUZAU (F1239) and DROVE (F1437) were cleared prior to midnight; the enemy defended towns and high ground with s/a and mortar fire and dug-in self-propelled guns. The 1st US Inf Div estimated 400 rounds artillery and 600 rounds mortar were received during the day. Identifications were from 941 and 943 Regts of 353 VG Div, as expected.

UDINGEN (F1137), BOICH (F1235), LEVERSBACH (F1036), and SOLLER (F1637) were cleared by 1st Inf Div 26 February, the enemy resisting from towns and scattered strong-points, stubbornly in some places; but generally, resistance was described as moderate. Mortar fire on our attacking troops sharply increased, and 900-1000 rounds were reported during the day by 1st Inf Div alone. As the attack moved south, 6 and 8 Para Regts were identified, and these joined forces in a company-strength counterattack, supported by 4 SP guns, from the south on DROVE at 0915A; this attack was repulsed with two SP guns destroyed. SP fire increased during the day, and 7-8 guns were operating on our south flank east of the river late in the afternoon.

Statements of enemy PWs taken 26 February from the Para units confirmed earlier information that 3 Para Div had taken over 6 Para Regt and other units from 85 Div, and that 85 Div no longer had a sector on III Corps front.

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On 27 February our attack continued making progress as 1st US Inf Div cleared JACOBWULLESHEIM (F1741) and FRANGENHEIM (F1737) prior to daylight against moderate resistance, and VETTELSS (F1938) in the afternoon against light resistance. A successful night attack was again made by 1st US Inf Div beginning at 1900, and KELZ (F1921), IRRESHEIM (F2144) and OBERBOLHEIM (F2247) were taken against very light resistance; a light bridge over the NEFFEL River was captured intact at the latter town.

Apparently the enemy had failed to profit by his experience two days before, and the 9th US Inf Div, attacking south from 1st US Inf Div's bridgehead met light to moderate resistance in clearing THUM (F1434) and NIDEGGEN (F1133). The latter town had been thought to be an enemy strong-point, but no strong attempt was made by the enemy to defend there or from other prepared lines. Artillery fire was moderate at first, but became heavy during the afternoon on our troops advancing south, the bulk of the fire coming from self-propelled guns. The 78th US Inf Div not yet across the river, reported increased enemy movement in its zone during the day; wisely, the trend appeared to be south and southeast.

By 27 February identifications of PWs taken in our attack had confirmed the presence of the 353 VG Div on the north and 3 Para Div with 6 Para Regt attached, in the center. To the south, in zone of the 78th US Inf Div deserters taken from time to time after 15 February tended to confirm the presence of the enemy 272 VG Div there. On 25 February 2 patrols of 78th US Inf Div penetrated to the center of the DER KERMETER Forest, deep in enemy territory in a salient pointing west formed by a large bend in the ROER River. Both patrols went undetected and observed only small enemy forces, and reported the forest not strongly held. On 28 February another highly successful, 3-man patrol of 78th US Inf Div, penetrated to KLOSTER MARIAWALD, again deep into enemy territory, with the mission of taking prisoners. This patrol returned with 5 PWs; interrogation confirmed the recent presence of 272 VG Div in the area, and also its more recent local with-drawal from DER KERMETER Forest.

Continuing successful night operations 28 February the 1st US Inf Div pushed to the NEFFEL River encountering generally light resistance, except for a stiff fight in taking NORVENICH (F2345). Artillery and mortar fire decreased somewhat, but heavy SP fire was received from the south and southeast. In the zone of the 9th US Inf Div the enemy resisted stubbornly throughout the day with heavy and effective s/a fire and fire from SP guns; two pockets of resistance in rear of our front lines gave trouble, and strongly resisted reduction. The attack of 78th US Inf Div south from NIDEGGEN met stiff resistance from the start from 6 Para Regt, 3 Para Div. Other identifications in the Corps zone were 48 and 89 Regt's of 12 VG Div, which was contacted as our units moved northeast. The 9th US Inf Div identified 902 Assault Gun Brig, probably the source of much of the SP fire received.

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Generally the enemy defense east of the ROER river was not strong; however, he was able to defend critical ground strongly, and to man scattered strong-points and defend them stubbornly; he could not, or did not, counterattack. Not many mines were encountered, and there appeared to be no planned mine defense; occasional fields were encountered, and particular stretches of road were heavily mined, and some towns heavily booby-trapped. Weather and terrain were obstacles to our advance; off-road travel was rendered practically impossible by mud; and roads were mud-covered at best, and pitted by shell-fire and undermined by several years neglect. Enemy artillery was light to moderate during our attack, and SP gun fire was moderate to heavy. Some concentrations of 50 rounds of artillery were reported toward the end of the month, on forward elements. Enemy air was active in good weather, but made few attacks on ground troops, the most notable exception being the night 24-25 February, when 6-7 enemy planes bombed and strafed the river-line in the northern part of the zone.

Total PWs taken during attack 25-28 February -- 1,304.

PART TWO -- Enemy Order of Battle

1. 272 VG Div. The division underwent a complete reformation in October and November. It participated in the unsuccessful drive to take MONSCHAU and was stopped by 99th US Inf Div at the start of the ARDENNES offensive. At the beginning of February it was heavily engaged in the fighting for the ROER Dams, and after first US Army closed up to the dams, it attempted a reorganization east of the river. 981 Regt had been practically destroyed and 982 Regt was also badly understrength, while 980 Regt kept in better shape. The division had received approximately 500 replacements late in December. Several deserters and prisoners taken from patrols during the last few days of February confirmed that the divisional sector was only lightly held, and this was found to be true after contact had been made in the attack of 1 March.

2. 3 Para Div. The division suffered severe losses in the ARDENNES campaign when it spearheaded the northern part of the drive. After having been shifted north, it was again exposed to heavy fighting in the battle for the ROER River in early February. After this action it reorganized in the MUSKIRCHEN area, yielding 8 Para Regt to 85 Inf Div which stayed in the line. It was assumed that both 5 and 9 Para Regts were being reformed; but the personnel available was apparently sufficient only to rebuild 5 Para Regt which took over part of the line shortly before our attack began. At the same time the division assumed control of its former 8 Para Regt and of the independent 6 Para Regt, both of which had until then been under control of 85 Inf Div. With this reorganization 3 Para Div became the strongest unit on III Corps front. All three of its Regts were contacted during the first three days of the attack.

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3. 85 Inf Div. The division was composed of 1053 and 1054 Gren Regts, but the latter was decimated in the fighting for the ROER Dams and was not reidentified in February. 1053 Regt was also severely disorganized and operated in the form of a Kampfgruppen, having absorbed several replacement units. 6 Para Regt was the third Regt. After the dissolution of 1054 Gren Regt and the relief of 3 Para Div from the line, 85 Inf Div took control of 8 Para Regt as a substitute for 1054 Regt. Both 8 and 6 Para Regts underwent some reorganization behind the protective screen of the ROER River, but 6 Para Regt, originally a four bn unit, could only be restored to a 2 Bn status. After the reformed 3 Para Div had again become ready to take over the line for the anticipated Allied offensive, the staff of 85 Inf Div was withdrawn around 21 February. The remnants of 1053 Gren Regt had been absorbed in the reformation of 6 and 8 Para Regts, and, with the strained manpower situation, its revival appears doubtful.

4. 353 VG Div. This division had been in continuous action since December and had received few replacements. It was severely mauled in the fighting for the ROER River in early February, and 942 Gren Regt was smashed beyond redemption. The reformation of 941 and 943 Gren Regts was attempted; but when encountered at the beginning of 1st US Inf Div attack, both Regts were found to be badly understrength. The division had to fall back under our attack, and lost heavily in PWs and casualties during the first three days of III Corps offensive.

5. 12 VG Div. After having suffered severe losses in the ARDENNES campaign the division was reorganized in the COLOGNE area, and on 20 February took positions in the overextended line between 353 and 363 VG Divs on VII US Corps front. Owing to the failure of 353 VG Div to hold against 1st US Inf Div attack, elements of the division were shifted south and were contacted in III Corps zone on 27 February.

PART THREE — Analysis of Prisoners of War

1. During the period from 1 February to 11 February, inclusive, along the ROER River, 81 Prisoners of war were processed by the III Corps PW Enclosure. During the period from 12 to 28 February, inclusive, 1354 Prisoners of War were captured by Corps Units, of which 544 were processed through Divisional PW Enclosures.

2. PWs processed during the period from 1 February to 11 February were from units located in the Siegfried Line, and consisted of deserters and members of unsuccessful patrols. They comprised 26 PWs from the 79 Volksgrenadier Division, 23 from the 5 Parachute Division, 19 from the 340 Volksgrenadier Division, 5 from the 9 Volksgrenadier Division, 1 each from the 26 and the 167 Volksgrenadier Divisions, and 6 from miscellaneous smaller units.

3. PWs processed during the period from 12 February to 28 February

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were practically all taken during operations east of the ROER in the last few days of the month, but included also a few deserters who crossed the ROER River to the lines of the 78th US Inf Div. PWs taken and processed by the 1st US Inf Div, aside from 50 PWs evacuated through the 8th US Inf Div of VII US Corps, were from the following units:

941 VG Regt, 353 Volksgrenadier Division	114
943 VG Regt, 353 Volksgrenadier Division	41
353 Engr Bn, 353 Volksgrenadier Division	4
353 Arty Regt, 353 Volksgrenadier Division	6
353 AT Bn, 353 Volksgrenadier Division	1
6 Para Regt, 3 Parachute Division	8
8 Para Regt, 3 Parachute Division	6
407 People's Arty Corps	6
XIII Fortress AT Bn	8
	<hr/> 194
50 PWs evacuated by 8th US Inf Div	50
	<hr/> 244

4. PWs captured and processed by the 9th US Inf Div totaled 294. The bulk of these PWs came from the 6 Para Regt, the 8 Para Regt, the 3 Para Engr Bn, and the 3 Para AT Bn of the 3 Para Div; the remainder were from the 941 VG Regt of the 353 Volksgrenadier Division.

5. Six deserters crossed the ROER River to surrender themselves to the 78th US Inf Div. Of these 4 were from the 980 VG Regt of the 272 Volksgrenadier Division, and 1 each from the 6 Para Regt and the 3 Para Mortar Bn of the 3 Para Div.

6. PWs captured during the OUR River phase (1-11 February) were poor soldierly material, being from units severely battered by the ARDENNES campaign and in poor physical condition as a result of the severe weather conditions and the poor food supply encountered by the Germans in the ARDENNES. PWs from the latter period of the month cannot be classed so generally. Those of the 353 Volksgrenadier Division, in addition to spending the winter badly fed in the defenses of the ROER River line, were of the usual caliber of Volksgrenadier Divisions; the two hundred-odd PWs taken during the first two days of our attack showed signs of the disintegration of their division. Men from the 3 Para Div, on the other hand, despite the privations of their winter on the ROER River, gave signs of some remnants of the fighting spirit that once made the Parachute Divisions crack troops of the German Army.

7. Listing by capturing units (processed PWs only):

6th US Armored Div	26	9th US Infantry Div	294
17th US Airborne Div	55	78th US Infantry Div	6
1st US Infantry Div	244	TOTAL	<hr/> 625

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SECTION V, AFTER ACTION REPORT

SUPPLY AND EVACUATION SUMMARY

1. SUPPLY

a. Class I (Rations)

- (1) During the period 1 February thru 28 February, rations were issued in the following proportion:

"B" Rations - 82%
Operational - 18%

- (2) Ration stocks were maintained at a satisfactory level throughout the period. There was no shortage of any particular type.

b. Class III

- (1) Gasoline and Oil.

- (a) The average daily issue of V-80 gasoline for the month was approximately 38,000 gallons. During the first ten days and last ten days the daily issue was higher and averaged approximately 55,000 gallons.

- (b) Adequate stocks of gasoline and allied products were on hand at all times at the railheads.

- (2) Solid Fuel

- (a) No critical shortage of coal was experienced during the month, however, it was necessary for units to conserve fuel.

c. Class V

- (1) Ordnance

- (a) Ammunition supply was normal throughout the period. Some difficulty was experienced in drawing ammunition because of poor road conditions caused by inclement weather and heavy traffic.

- (b) Ammunition for the British 25 pounder was supplied to one Field Artillery Battalion equipped with this weapon.

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- (c) Items of ammunition not obtainable in the quantities desired were:

4.5" Gun
75mm How, canister
155mm ML, Smoke, WP

- (d) The following types of German ammunition were fired against the enemy:

88mm
Panzerfaust "60"
12.0 cm mortar ammunition

(2) Chemical

- (a) During the early part of the month there was a critical shortage of WP Shells for 4.2" chemical mortars but during the latter part of the month the supply status of this type of ammunition improved.
- (b) Practically all HE ammunition available for 4.2" chemical mortars was ammunition previously suspended but now released for firing by lanyard only.

(3) Engineer

- (a) Supply was normal. No critical shortages of engineer items was experienced.

d. Class II & IV during the period.

(1) Quartermaster

- (a) Shortages of certain Quartermaster items continued to be critical. Among these items critically short were:

Outfit, cooking, 1-burner
Size EE shoes
Combat clothing
Brushes
Soap

- (b) Continued issues of special items of winter clothing including shoe-pacs, ski socks, mittens with shells and jackets, field, pile lined were made.

(2) Ordnance

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- (a) As a whole, supply of general ordnance items was good. Occasionally it was not possible to secure specific items, such as 700x24 tires for engineer graders and waterproofing kits to process tanks in preparation for the river crossing.
- (b) A large quantity of American equipment which had been concentrated in the area that was overrun by the Germans in The Ardennes Breakthrough was recaptured, much of it in serviceable condition. Included in this recovered equipment were the following vehicles:

M4 Tanks	43
M10 TD's	25
Trk, 1/4 ton, 4x4	16
M29 Light Cargo Carrier	9
M5 Tanks	4
M36 TD's	2
57mm Gun	2
Trk, 2 1/2 ton	3
General purpose vehicles and trailers	

(3) Chemical

- (a) Thirty new type portable flame throwers, M2-2 with five fillings per flame thrower and one service kit per ten flame throwers was made available for distribution. These were allocated for training purposes on the basis of ten to each of three infantry divisions.
- (b) A survey of gas masks revealed that a large portion of black rubber facepieces had developed a permanent set. It is planned that all black rubber facepiece masks in the hands of troops will be replaced.

(4) Medical

Medical supplies were adequate and no critical shortages were reported.

(5) Signal

- (a) An acute shortage of field wire and spiral-four cable continued to exist.

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- (b) When III Corps was relieved from assignment to Third Army, all radio link VHF equipment and all telephone and telegraph carrier equipment except one complete terminal of CF-1 and CF-2 were turned in at the request of Third Army Signal Supply Officer. First Army left in place and turned over responsibility for operation of the radio link VHF and carrier equipment which had been operated by the XVIII Airborne Corps.
- (c) During the period the working level of spiral four cable was raised from 50 miles to 100 miles. This allows a safer reserve for installation when several major units are on the move at one time.
- (d) Additional vehicles were issued to the 94th Signal Battalion as follows:
 - Truck, 3/4 ton, 4x4, Weapon Carrier to augment the existing allowances for wire construction teams 16
 - Trailer, 1 ton, 2 wheel cargo to provide transportation for the additional spiral four cable 6
 - Truck, 3/4 ton, 4x4, C & R for installation of SCR-193 radios. 3

(6) Engineer

- (a) During the first half of this period Corps Engineer operated a Corps bridge dump as a forward supply point to furnish Bailey bridging when required. In order to give close support the bridging material was moved forward as the front advanced. Bailey bridging on hand with the basic load of the 513th Engineer Light Ponton Company and in the Corps bridge dump was sufficient for operations.
- (b) Critical items of engineer supply included foot bridge equipment and items for infantry support rafts. These items were very critical and it became necessary to ship these into the Army supply point by rail or air. A sufficient amount arrived in time to meet needs of the Roer River crossing but very little was left in reserve.

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- (c) Due to the large number of saw mills, lumber in sufficient quantities was available in the Corps Areas. Supply of lumber to units, however, was controlled by Army.

2. OPERATION

a. Quartermaster

(1) Laundry

- (a) During the first half of the period two laundry platoons were in support of III Corps. Because of the nature of the terrain, roadnet and tactical situation during the first ten days of February, the laundry operated by platoons rather than by section as in January. Displacements were made, however, so that combat units were required to make only relatively short hauls for laundry service.
- (b) During the latter half of the month a full laundry company was placed in support of III Corps. The same policy was followed in that laundry units were operated as platoons placed well forward in close support of combat units.

(2) Fumigation & Bath

- (a) One Fumigation and Bath Company supported III Corps. The platoons were placed one forward and one to the rear. As the front advanced the rear platoon leapfrogged ahead.
- (b) The Corps Quartermaster made assignment as to which units each platoon would support, but actual bathing schedules were worked out between the Fumigation and Bath Officers and Division Quartermasters.

(3) Salvage

- (a) An intensive program of battlefield recovery was initiated in the area south and east of BASTOGNE. Melting snow uncovered a considerable amount of salvage items. Divisions were instructed to initiate vigorous programs and the Corps Quartermaster was directed to prepare a plan for recovery in the Corps Area in rear of division areas. Seventy-two civilians were hired to collect salvage and 12 trucks,

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2½ ton, were dispatched each day to haul salvage collected in the Corps Area. During the period 1-12 February, Division and Corps salvage teams had recovered 214 truck loads of salvage of all types.

- (b) On 20 February, a similar program was initiated in the new Corps Zone. In this plan six trucks, 2½ ton, with 24 men from the Quartermaster Service Company supporting Corps, were formed into three salvage teams. During the period 21-28 February, 133 truck loads of all types of equipment were recovered. Among the items salvaged were:

3,209	Gasoline can
320	Rifle, M1
26	Rifle, German
1	Rifle, Automatic
28	Carbine
10	Machine Gun, cal..30
2	Machine Gun, light, German
5	Submachine Gun, M3
4	Submachine Gun, cal..45, M1A1
3	Machine Pistol, German
10	Pistol, cal..45, M1911A1
12	Launcher, rocket
3	Flame Thrower
1	Mortar, 60mm
2	Mortar, 81mm
1	1½ ton Weapons Carrier, comp
141	Miscellaneous weapons, unreported type

(4) Burial and Graves Registration

- (a) During February, 863 American and 1,066 enemy dead were evacuated through Division and Corps graves registration collecting points.
- (b) Of the total American dead evacuated during February, three, or three tenths of one per cent, remain unidentified.
- (c) Because of melting snow, a large number of both American and enemy dead were uncovered.

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b. Ordnance

- (1) The 83d Ordnance Battalion with seven maintenance companies, together with three maintenance companies and one depot company of the 47th Ordnance Battalion had the mission of supporting III Corps.
- (2) Ordnance units in general were in close support of combat units throughout the period. In a few instances, because of congested conditions and the unavailability of suitable accommodations, ordnance units were not able to displace as rapidly as desired, however, ordnance support was adequate.
- (3) Two ordnance bomb disposal squads attached to III Corps were sent to assist units in bomb disposal, examination of captured ammunition and similar tasks.
- (4) Maintenance inspections of Corps units were made by personnel from the Ordnance Section. The results of these inspections showed that in many instances first and second echelon maintenance had dropped below the standard required by III Corps. Steps were initiated to have deficiencies corrected.

c. Engineer

(1) Bridging

- (a) Bailey: During the period 1,070 feet of Bailey bridge was constructed. Seven-hundred-sixty feet was either removed or replaced by timber bridges.
 - (b) Treadway: During the period 492 feet of Treadway bridge was constructed. No Treadway bridging was removed or replaced during the period.
 - (c) Special bridges: Three 96' bridges and one 96' infantry support raft were committed during the period.
- (2) Three quarries were operated during the latter half of February using Crusher power shovels.

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- (3) Instruction and assistance in camouflage technique was furnished by the engineer camouflage company in support of III Corps. This unit also furnished camouflage material when and where needed.
- (4) Early during the period as the snow and ice melted it became necessary in many instances to sweep roads and shoulders again for mines.
- (5) Maintenance of roads became a serious problem during the period. With the frost leaving the ground, the snow melting, the continued rain, and the heavy military traffic necessary because of large scale troop movements and supply traffic many roads became impassable. In order that tactical operations would not be hindered road maintenance became a matter of first priority.

d. Signal

- (1) During the first twelve days of February all units concentrated on the recovery of field wire and spiral-four cable within their zones. This program was instigated in an effort to alleviate the acute shortage of wire and cable. Special wire recovery teams were formed and as a result the quantities recovered were sufficient to materially reduce demands on depot stocks.

e. Medical

- (1) During the month of February no particular problem existed. From the 1st to the 12th of February, the tactical situation east of BASTOGNE was of a holding nature and consequently few casualties were incurred. Of these only a few were of a serious nature. Cases of trench foot, frost bite and battle exhaustion were practically nil because of the tactical situation, milder weather and preventive measures which had been adopted.
- (2) After 12 February when III Corps was given a new sector the mission of III Corps remained essentially unchanged until the last few days of the month when III Corps attacked across the Roer River.

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- (3) A detachment of one officer and eight enlisted men was placed at the Corps Rest Center to operate the Rest Center Dispensary.
- (4) The Corps Clearing Station handled 112 patients during the period.
- (5) For a summary of admissions and dispositions see Inclosure No 1.

3. TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

a. Traffic Clearances

- (1) During the period the Corps operated in two sectors. From 1 February 1945 through 11 February 1945 operations were conducted in the area south and east of BASTOGNE, Belgium. During this time considerable shifting of troops within and through the Corps zone was accomplished. Thirty nine convoys involving 4,977 vehicles were scheduled and routed by the Traffic Section in the G-4 Office. Other troop movements involving the displacement of the 6th Armored Division and the 90th Infantry Division were coordinated by the Traffic Section although movement took place within divisional areas. At the end of the period plans had been completed for the movement of the 17th Airborne Division out of the area.
- (2) The rest of the month Corps activity was centered just west of the Roer River in the ZWEIFALL, HURTGEN, SCHMIDT area. Again traffic in the zone was very heavy because of the shifting of troops and service units in preparation for the attack across the Roer River. The spring rains and breaking of roads limited the number of passable routes and made it necessary to carefully coordinate all movements. In addition to service, artillery, engineer and other supporting units, the following divisions moved into, through or out of the Corps sector: 9th Infantry Division; elements of 7th Armored Division; 82d Airborne Division and the 28th Infantry Division. From 12 February 1945 through 28 February, ninety-one clearances for convoys involving 9,542 vehicles were scheduled and routed by the Traffic Section in the G-4 Office.

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- (3) A total of 130 clearances for 14,517 vehicles were issued during the month of February.

b. Transportation

- (1) While operating in the Third Army Area, two Quartermaster truck companies were assigned to III Corps. During this time 55 dispatches involving 432 vehicles were made. Of the total number of trucks dispatched for the period 221 were used to transport personnel and 98 were used to collect and haul salvage and recovered equipment.
- (2) While in the First Army Area from 14 February to the end of the month one quartermaster truck company was in support of III Corps. In order to augment this transportation an arrangement was made to call upon trucks of units assigned to Corps antiaircraft artillery units, when necessary. During the period 35 dispatches involving 488 vehicles were made. Of this total, 23 dispatches involving 179 vehicles were made from the truck company; the remainder of the dispatches were made from antiaircraft artillery units and were dispatched primarily to transport personnel and haul bridge equipment.
- (3) Total dispatches for the month totaled 90 and involved 920 vehicles.

1 Incl:

Incl 1 - Summary of Casualties: Admissions and Dispositions

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ADMISSIONS AND DISPOSITIONS for month ending 28 February 1945

UNIT	DATES	ADMISSIONS					DISPOSITIONS							
		TF	DISEASE B. EX N. P.	OTHER	N. B. I.	B. I. F. B. SIA LIA	TOTAL ADM	DUTY EVAC	DIED	REM'G DISP'S	TOTAL			
III Corps Ctr	1 to 28 Incl: 2	:	4	0	69	:	29	:	2	3	3:	112:	58:	112:
1st Inf Div	13 to 28 Incl: 3	:	33	0	434	:	48	:	8	14	287:	827:	4	827:
6th Armd Div	1 to 9 Incl: 6	:	25	0	238	:	35	:	19	21	79:	423:	13	229
9th Armd Div	28 Feb only	:	0	0	1	:	0	:	0	0	0:	1:	0	1:
9th Inf Div	19 to 28 Incl: 0	:	13	0	383	:	51	:	1	62	95:	605:	7	510
17th A/B Div	1 to 9 Incl: 9	:	7	0	184	:	0	:	9	35	109:	353:	17	282
73th Inf Div	14 to 28 Incl: 13	:	38	0	376	:	113	:	0	22	132:	694:	3	479
32d A/B Div	13 to 20 Incl: 47	:	11	0	108	:	69	:	7	12	30:	284:	4	234
TOTAL	:	80	131	0	1793	:	345	:	46	169	735:	3299:	51	2566

Explanation of Abbreviations:

TF	-	Trench Foot	B.I.	-	Battle Injuries
B.EX	-	Battle Exhaustion	F.B.	-	Frost Bite
N.P.	-	Neuropsychiatrics	SIA	-	Severely Wounded in Action
N.B.I.	-	Non-battle Injuries	LIA	-	Lightly Wounded in Action
			REM'G	-	Remaining

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SECTION VI, AFTER ACTION REPORT, HEADQUARTERS III CORPS

PERSONNEL SUMMARY

1. Battle and Non-Battle Casualties: During the month, units under III Corps suffered 1241 battle casualties while 2591 were hospitalized for illness and non-battle injuries. The following table shows these casualties by major component and type:

Table No. 1

:	:	:	:	:	Total :	Sick & :	Total :	Days in:
:	:	KIA :	WIA :	MIA :	BC :	Non BC :	Casualties :	Corps :
: Corps Troops :	18 :	94 :	0 :	112 :	392 :	504 :	:	:
: 1st Inf Div :	31 :	279 :	5 :	315 :	472 :	787 :	16 :	:
: 9th Inf Div :	29 :	182 :	2 :	213 :	369 :	582 :	10 :	:
: 78th Inf Div :	13 :	149 :	20 :	182 :	498 :	680 :	16 :	:
: 6th Armd Div :	17 :	145 :	16 :	178 :	378 :	556 :	11 :	:
: 9th Armd Div :	0 :	0 :	0 :	0 :	23 :	23 :	5 :	:
: 17th A/B Div :	25 :	147 :	19 :	191 :	222 :	413 :	10 :	:
: 82nd A/B Div :	16 :	32 :	2 :	50 :	237 :	287 :	6 :	:
: Total :	149 :	1028 :	64 :	1241 :	2591 :	3832 :	:	:

2. Prisoners of War Captured: A total of 1336 prisoners were captured by III Corps units during the month. See Table No. 2 for the breakdown of captures by major components and by date.

3. Reinforcements Received and Returnees from Hospitals: A total of 2618 reinforcements were received and 2930 former members of units were returned from hospitals during the period. At the close of the period the reinforcement situation was not particularly acute. Principal shortages were in Engineers, Artillery and Cavalry trained personnel. See Tables No. 3 and 4 for breakdown by major components.

4. Graves Registration: During the period American, allied and enemy burials were made in the following cemeteries:

U. S. Military Cemetery No. 1, Grand Failly, France
U. S. Military Cemetery No. 1, Hamm, France
U. S. Military Cemetery, Henri-Chapelle, Belgium

5. Awards and Decorations: During the month of February this headquarters awarded 44 Silver Stars, 1 Soldier's Medal, 178 Bronze Star Medals and 8 Air Medals. In addition, recommendation for 5 Distinguished Service Crosses, 5 Legions of Merit and 5 Medals of Honor were approved and forwarded to the appropriate Army Commanders.

6. Special Service:

a. Rest Centers were opened and operated in Arlon and Huy, Belgium. The center in Arlon was in operation for 16 days of the period

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and served a total of 1200 officers and men. The center at Huy was opened for operation on 12 February and served a total of 130 officers and 2450 enlisted men during the last half of the month. Recreation facilities were operated by the Corps Special Service Company.

b. Red Cross Clubmobiles, operating on detached service from the Third U. S. Army, served coffee and doughnuts to approximately 50000 combat troops during the first half of the period. A section of four clubmobiles was permanently assigned the Corps by First U. S. Army and reported on 27 February.

c. The Corps Cinemobile unit devoted most of its time to the two rest centers but made frequent movie showings to rear elements of the Corps.

d. Through the medium of motion picture shows, GI shows, USO shows and orchestras, approximately 275000 troops received entertainment through 1453 showings or presentations. Large quantities of athletic and recreational equipment were distributed through Special Service channels.

7. American Red Cross: Comfort articles were largely distributed through medical channels to patients and unit personnel. Distribution was also made through the Corps Rest Centers. These items consisted of 2600 packs of gum, 2200 packs of cigarettes, 1650 candy bars, 700 bars of soap, 600 combs, 700 tubes of toothpaste, 675 packs of tobacco and quantities of playing cards, stationery and magazines. The field director handled 187 welfare cases during the month. These cases involved handling death messages, securing health reports and numerous similar matters.

8. Leaves, Furloughs and Passes:

a. To the United States: Under the provisions of Circular 124, Headquarters European Theater of Operations, United States Army, 1944, a total of 299 officers and enlisted men were returned to the United States for thirty day periods of leave or furlough. Not more than 8 percent of the total were officers. Allocations to major components were as follows:

6th Armored Division	55
1st Infantry Division	89
9th Infantry Division	89
78th Infantry Division	11
Corps Troops	55

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b. To Paris, France: The privilege of visiting Paris, France on pass for 72 hour periods was extended to 299 officers and 1160 enlisted men from elements of the Corps during the month.

c. To Brussels, Belgium: During the period 13 February to 28 February, after arriving under First Army control, a total of 28 officers and 278 enlisted men were granted 72 hour passes to visit the city of Brussels, Belgium.

d. Leaves and Furloughs to Great Britain: Two separate plans were in operation which permitted personnel of the command to visit the United Kingdom. One of these plans permitted a limited number of field grade officers to make the journey by air for 72 hour periods of temporary duty or on 7 day leave, as they desired. Five officers availed themselves of this service during the period. The second plan permitted officers and men to travel by surface transportation for 7 day periods of leave or furlough. Under this latter plan 34 officers and 329 enlisted men visited Great Britain.

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PRISONERS OF WAR CAPTURED

Table No. 2

: : Date:	: : Troops	: : Corps	: : 1st : Inf	: : 9th : Inf	: : 78th : Inf	: : 6th : Armd	: : 9th : Armd	: : 17th : AB	: : 82nd : AB	: : : : Div	: : : : Div
: 1	: 6	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 3	: x	: 25	: x	: 34	: :
: 2	: 0	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 1	: x	: 14	: x	: 15	: :
: 3	: 0	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 0	: x	: 19	: x	: 19	: :
: 4	: 0	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 1	: x	: 1	: x	: 2	: :
: 5	: 0	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 0	: x	: 4	: x	: 4	: :
: 6	: 0	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 1	: x	: 14	: x	: 15	: :
: 7	: 2	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 2	: x	: 1	: x	: 5	: :
: 8	: 0	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 9	: x	: 5	: x	: 14	: :
: 9	: 3	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 7	: x	: 0	: x	: 10	: :
: 10	: 4	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 8	: x	: 3	: x	: 15	: :
: 11	: 3	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 3	: x	: x	: x	: 6	: :
: 12	: 0	: x	: x	: x	: x	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 0	: :
: 13	: 0	: 0	: x	: 13	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 0	: 13	: :
: 14	: 0	: 0	: x	: 0	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 0	: 0	: :
: 15	: 0	: 0	: x	: 0	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 0	: 0	: :
: 16	: 0	: 0	: x	: 3	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 3	: 6	: :
: 17	: 0	: 0	: x	: 1	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 0	: 1	: :
: 18	: 0	: 0	: x	: 0	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 0	: 0	: :
: 19	: 0	: 0	: 0	: 1	: x	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 1	: :
: 20	: 0	: 0	: 0	: 0	: x	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 0	: :
: 21	: 0	: 0	: 0	: 0	: x	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 0	: :
: 22	: 0	: 0	: 0	: 0	: x	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 0	: :
: 23	: 0	: 0	: 0	: 0	: x	: x	: x	: x	: x	: 0	: :
: 24	: 0	: 0	: 0	: 0	: x	: 0	: x	: x	: x	: 0	: :
: 25	: 0	: 0	: 0	: 0	: x	: 0	: x	: x	: x	: 0	: :
: 26	: 0	: 129	: 0	: 4	: x	: 0	: x	: x	: x	: 133	: :
: 27	: 0	: 472	: 294	: 1	: x	: 0	: x	: x	: x	: 767	: :
: 28	: 0	: 169	: 100	: 7	: x	: 0	: x	: x	: x	: 276	: :
: :	: 18	: 770	: 394	: 30	: 35	: 0	: 86	: 3	: 1336	: :	: :

x Not assigned to III Corps on this date.

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REINFORCEMENTS RECEIVED

Table No. 3

		1st	9th	78th	6th	9th	17th	82nd	
	Corps	Inf	Inf	Inf	Armd	Armd	AB	AB	
Date	Troops	Div	Div	Div	Div	Div	Div	Div	Total
1	0	x	x	x	0	x	4	x	4
2	0	x	x	x	0	x	3	x	3
3	9	x	x	x	0	x	17	x	26
4	2	x	x	x	0	x	7	x	9
5	11	x	x	x	4	x	4	x	19
6	15	x	x	x	7	x	4	x	26
7	15	x	x	x	140	x	5	x	160
8	5	x	x	x	0	x	25	x	30
9	2	x	x	x	1	x	3	x	6
10	6	x	x	x	0	x	0	x	6
11	1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	1
12	0	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	0
13	0	22	x	10	x	x	x	14	46
14	7	0	x	4	x	x	x	35	46
15	3	0	x	56	x	x	x	89	148
16	10	0	x	36	x	x	x	63	109
17	71	197	x	5	x	x	x	0	273
18	17	28	x	51	x	x	x	21	117
19	20	0	236	665	x	x	x	x	921
20	15	32	28	19	x	x	x	x	94
21	21	10	12	7	x	x	x	x	50
22	18	0	99	106	x	x	x	x	223
23	7	2	0	9	x	x	x	x	18
24	6	2	2	0	x	0	x	x	10
25	5	0	2	18	x	0	x	x	25
26	6	15	11	1	x	0	x	x	33
27	4	0	5	203	x	0	x	x	212
28	3	0	0	0	x	0	x	x	3
Total	279	308	395	1190	152	0	72	222	2618

x Not assigned to III Corps on this date.

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HOSPITAL RETURNEES (RTD's)

Table No. 4

		1st	9th	78th	6th	9th	17th	82nd:	
	Corps	Inf	Inf	Inf	Armd	Armd	AB	AB	
Date	Troops	Div	Div	Div	Div	Div	Div	Div	Total
1	18	x	x	x	34	x	58	x	110
2	8	x	x	x	43	x	14	x	65
3	14	x	x	x	52	x	35	x	101
4	6	x	x	x	71	x	24	x	101
5	6	x	x	x	33	x	51	x	90
6	13	x	x	x	28	x	47	x	88
7	12	x	x	x	88	x	62	x	162
8	29	x	x	x	37	x	0	x	66
9	9	x	x	x	18	x	17	x	44
10	10	x	x	x	46	x	8	x	64
11	19	x	x	x	37	x	x	x	56
12	0	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	0
13	0	0	x	3	x	x	x	13	16
14	15	158	x	4	x	x	x	47	224
15	6	22	x	48	x	x	x	99	175
16	4	54	x	24	x	x	x	103	185
17	14	79	x	41	x	x	x	52	186
18	0	57	x	3	x	x	x	247	307
19	5	1	4	16	x	x	x	x	26
20	2	53	8	0	x	x	x	x	63
21	13	108	0	4	x	x	x	x	125
22	6	7	159	19	x	x	x	x	191
23	8	61	26	17	x	x	x	x	112
24	7	71	61	39	x	0	x	x	178
25	10	1	0	13	x	0	x	x	24
26	0	53	48	0	x	0	x	x	101
27	10	1	0	38	x	0	x	x	49
28	1	0	19	1	x	0	x	x	21
	245	726	325	270	487	0	316	561	2930

x Not assigned to III Corps on this date.

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SECTION VII, AFTER ACTION REPORT

CIVIL AFFAIRS/MILITARY GOVERNMENT SUMMARY

PART I - Belgium and Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, 1 February to 12 February 1945.

1. Situation

a. With the military operations in the Corps Zone being more or less static during the first ten days of this month, the population in Cantons of Wiltz and Clervaux was given the much hoped for opportunity to come out of cellars where many of them stayed during combat activity. A general clean up of towns and villages, especially those in forward areas, was ordered. Civil Affairs and Military Government Detachments were charged with the responsibility for the carrying out of the order and general supervision of the project. The work was to be done by local civilian labor, assisted by Army trucks and drivers. Luxembourg Government furnished several hundred shovels, picks, rakes, etc., for use in this work. At the end of the period, although the project was far from completed, considerable progress was achieved: streets and highways were cleared of debris and rubble and many hundreds of dead livestock interred in deep ditches dug by Army "bulldozers".

b. During this period there occurred an unseasonable thaw, melting the snow which accumulated during prior weeks and this together with heavy military traffic caused severe damage to roadbeds. Civil Affairs/Military Government Detachments called upon the civil authorities to provide and maintain crews of civilian workmen to keep roads clear of water in low spots and to make necessary repairs so as not to delay or impede military traffic, which was very heavy at this time, due to shifting and grouping of units of considerable size.

c. Considerable number of diphtheria cases were uncovered among civilians in forward areas and since large number of troops were billeted in towns and villages there was danger of spread of the disease among the troops. Several mobile ambulance units, each consisting of a civilian doctor and nurse, were immediately called by the Civil Affairs/Military Government Detachments to newly uncovered areas and all known cases were at once removed to temporary hospitals located in rear areas; Army G-5 Public Health Officers were also on the scene checking and supervising local conditions.

d. Considerable number of local civilians suspected of collaboration with Germans, and several German Army deserters uncovered by Civil

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Affairs/Military Government Detachments, were arrested and turned over to CIC and local authorities for prosecution. During the first ten days of this period Civil Affairs/Military Government Detachments uncovered and spotted for Graves Registration Section, approximately 150 dead German soldiers. Military Government Detachment at Redange, Luxembourg uncovered and turned over to G-2 Section a German balloon, apparent purpose of which was determining and transmitting reports on atmospheric conditions.

e. Considerable quantities of U.S. Government property in the hands of civilians were uncovered by Civil Affairs/Military Government Detachments. On 6 February, a ten day salvage drive throughout Corps area was initiated by this section. Civil authorities and the population were asked to participate in this drive by collecting throughout their own areas, all such property and bringing same to previously designated collection centers. Great quantities of U.S. Army articles of clothing, equipment, ammunition and materiel was thusly recovered. Departure from area and loss of control of detachments to successor Corps before completion of drive prevented ascertainment of amounts and values of total salvage.

f. One hundred tons of indigenous foodstuffs were transported by Army trucks furnished by G-4 Section to civilian food depots throughout Province of Luxembourg, Belgium.

g. Effective 5 February, civilian curfew hours were changed in city of Arlon (P6222) from previous 1800-0600, to 2100-0600 hours, and throughout the remainder of Corps area to 2000-0600 hours. This change together with permission, except in forward areas, to circulate up to 6 kilometers without a pass, was met with hearty approval and satisfaction by all civilians. Cooperation of local civil authorities with the military continued to be very good and the relationship between civilians and troops very cordial.

2. Assignment of Troops and Operations

During the period 1 February to 12 February 1945, Civil Affairs/Military Government Detachments were assigned as follows:

<u>Detachment</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Coord</u>	<u>Period</u>
C1A1	Arlon, Belgium	P6222	1 February - 12 February
I6G2	Redange, Luxembourg	P6731	1 February - 12 February
D6B1	Wiltz, Luxembourg	P7054	1 February - 12 February
G3B2	Clervaux, Luxembourg	P7663	1 February - 12 February
I17G2	Martelange, Belgium	P5638	1 February - 12 February
I13G2	Redange, Luxembourg	P6731	9 February - 12 February

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PART II - Germany, 13 February to 28 February 1945.

1. Situation

a. III Corps Zone of Operations during this period was contained in the southerly portions of Aachen and Duren Landkreise (Landkreis is comparable to our county) and the northerly portions of Monschau and of Schleiden Landkreise of Rhine Province. In assuming control of area, five Military Government Detachments, previously controlled by XVIII Corps (Airborne) came under operational control of the III Corps. The Corps Forward echelon was established at Zweifall (Landkreis Monschau) Germany, and the rear echelon at Maeren, Belgium.

b. Military Government of that part of Corps area in Germany had already been established. Estimate of the situation in the Corps area showed heavily ruined towns and villages with very small populations: large percentage of the population was evacuated by the Nazis. The civilians who stayed behind appear to be timid, apathetic, eager to oblige and subservient in manner. However, as the tide of battle passes, the feeling of apathy and hopelessness in the Germans is gradually being replaced by a desire to make the best of prevailing conditions. Local civil government is composed mostly of temporary appointees and close supervision by Military Government officers is maintained: several instances of disobedience by appointed officials, to orders of Military Government Officers resulted in immediate dismissals, arrest and jail sentences. This course of action produced the desired results, namely--obedience to orders.

c. Upon assuming control of area, the curfew regulations in force permitted the women and children to circulate within limits of towns and villages one hour in the forenoon and one hour in the afternoon; male adults were not allowed to circulate except to and from places of employment in the morning and at end of days work. In spite of such severe restrictions, there were just six violations of the curfew regulations throughout Corps area; the offenders in the latter cases were prosecuted before Military Government Courts, found guilty and appropriately punished. On Corps order, effective 19 February, the curfew hours were established at 1800 to 0700 and circulation without pass within town and village limits permitted: attendance at church service was allowed. These concessions were quite pleasing to the population.

d. Several cases of unlawful possession of U.S. Property were brought before Military Government Courts and convictions obtained in all. In nearly all such cases defendants testified to obtaining the articles from U.S. Soldiers, either as gifts or in payment for personal service, but when requested to, could not identify the soldiers.

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Several cases of failure to disclose possession (Military Government Law No. 53) of foreign currency, were tried and sentences of one year in jail imposed. One case of concealment of records (Ord. 1, Art. 1, Sec. 15) and Misleading a Member of Allied Forces (Ord. 1, Art. 1, Sec. 17) was tried and a sentence of ten years imprisonment and 10,000 Marks fine imposed. A case worthy of note, due to international prominence and reputed wealth of the defendant is that of Willy Mosler, said to be an associate of the well-known financier and industrialist, Thyssen; the defendant was tried and found guilty of unauthorized possession of ammunition, possession of Allied goods and of giving false information. He was sentenced to one year imprisonment.

e. Stores and shops were closed because the Nazis stripped them of all goods and merchandise. There is an acute shortage of clothing and shoes. Local food stocks are so low that the daily ration provides but 800 to 900 calories. Except for single horse-drawn vehicles and wheel carts, there is no other means of civilian transport. During later part of period several meetings of farmers were held for purpose of planning acreage and for agricultural control. Efforts are being made by Military Government Detachments to obtain seed from U.S. Stocks; Military Government Staff Agricultural experts are assisting farmers in their problems.

f. Except for considerable number of cases of scabies, the health of the population is generally good.

g. German civilians are apparently aware of our anti-fraternization orders and they do not attempt to hinder or associate with troops, they are not antagonistic and so far are obeying all enactments and orders.

h. There is a scarcity of civilian labor; available workers are boys between 14-16 years and old men up to 65 years of age.

i. The first German language newspaper, published in Aachen by German editorial and mechanical staff, made its appearance during latter part of period; publication is under supervision of Military Government.

2. Operations

During the period 13 February to 28 February 1945, Military Government Detachments, performing normal Military Government functions, were assigned as follows:

<u>Detachment</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Coord</u>	<u>Period</u>
111D2	Zweifall, Germany	K9536	13 February - 28 February
19G2	Rott, Germany	K9332	13 February - 28 February

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<u>Detachment</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Coord</u>	<u>Period</u>
H5D2	Raeren, Belgium	K8532	13 February - 28 February
H6H2	Roetgen, Germany	K9229	13 February - 28 February
H7H2	Vicht, Germany	K9639	13 February - 28 February
H1B3	Walheim, Germany	K9036	22 February - 28 February
I1B3	Roetgen, Germany	K9229	22 February - 28 February
H2B3	Lammersdorf, Germany	K9727	23 February - 28 February

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SECTION VIII, AFTER ACTION REPORT

ENGINEER OPERATIONS

1. Introduction

At the beginning of the operations for the month, engineer troops of III Corps consisted of the 1123rd Engineer Combat Group with three combat battalions and a treadway bridge company, and of the 1137th Engineer Combat Group with three combat battalions, a light ponton company, a light equipment company, and a dump truck company. The list below shows the organization and attachments as of 1 February:

1123rd Engineer Combat Group - Attached III Corps
Attached

178th Engineer Combat Battalion
188th Engineer Combat Battalion
280th Engineer Combat Battalion
996th Engineer Treadway Bridge Company (-1 platoon)
1 Platoon, 632nd Engineer Light Equipment Company
1 Platoon, 513th Engineer Light Ponton Company

1137th Engineer Combat Group - Attached III Corps
Attached

145th Engineer Combat Battalion
183rd Engineer Combat Battalion
249th Engineer Combat Battalion
513th Engineer Light Ponton Company (-1 platoon)
632nd Engineer Light Equipment Company (-1 platoon)
770th Engineer Dump Truck Company (Attached 183rd Engr C Bn)
1 Platoon, 996th Engineer Treadway Bridge Company

961st Engineer Maintenance Company - Attached III Corps

2942nd Engineer Technical Intelligence Team - Attached III Corps

This organization remained substantially the same until III Corps Headquarters was transferred from Third Army to First Army on 12 February. The changes in organization which occurred prior to movement of Corps were the transfer of the Light Equipage Platoon of the 511th Engineer Light Ponton Company from VIII Corps to III Corps on 4 February, the transfer from Corps of the 280th Engineer Combat Battalion on 6 February, the transfer to Corps of the 161st Chemical Company (SG) on 11 February, being attached to the 1123rd Engineer Combat Group.

Upon assignment of Corps to First Army and relief of XVIII Airborne Corps, the organization and attachments were as follows on

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13 February:

1111th Engineer Combat Group - Attached III Corps
Attached

- 51st Engineer Combat Battalion
- 276th Engineer Combat Battalion
- 291st Engineer Combat Battalion
- 299th Engineer Combat Battalion
- 300th Engineer Combat Battalion
- 501st Engineer Light Ponton Company
- 629th Engineer Light Equipment Company
- 994th Engineer Treadway Bridge Company
- 72nd Engineer Light Ponton Company
- Contact Platoon, 467th Engineer Maintenance Company
- "B" Company, 738th Tank Battalion

2942nd Engineer Technical Intelligence Team - Attached III Corps

1159th Engineer Combat Group - Attached III Corps
(Group had just come to the continent from England)

The 299th Engineer C Battalion was detached from 1111th Engineer Combat Group and attached to 1159th Engineer C Group, and the Light Equipment Platoon, 502nd Engineer Light Ponton Company was transferred from VII Corps and attached to 1111th Engineer C Group, both on 16 February. The 672nd Engineer Topographic Company was attached on 17 February. Then on 18 February, troops were as follows:

1111th Engineer Combat Group - Attached III Corps
Attached

- 291st Engineer Combat Battalion
- 51st Engineer Combat Battalion
- 300th Engineer Combat Battalion
- 501st Engineer Light Ponton Company
- 629th Engineer Light Equipment Company (-1 platoon)
- 994th Engineer Treadway Bridge Company (-1 platoon)
- "B" Company, 738th Tank Battalion
- 15 Trucks, 460th Amphibious Truck Company

1159th Engineer Combat Group - Attached III Corps
Attached

- 299th Engineer Combat Battalion
- 284th Engineer Combat Battalion
- 276th Engineer Combat Battalion
- 72nd Engineer Light Ponton Company
- 1 (LE) Platoon, 502nd Engineer Light Ponton Company
- 1 Platoon, 629th Engineer Light Equipment Company
- 1 Platoon, 994th Engineer Treadway Bridge Company
- 10 Trucks, 460th Amphibious Truck Company

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672nd Engineer Topographic Company - Attached III Corps
2942d Engineer Technical Intelligence Team - Attached III Corps

On 23 February, the 998th Engineer Treadway Bridge Company was attached to III Corps and subsequently attached to 1159th Engineer Combat Group. On the same day the 299th Engineer Combat Battalion with attachments of 1 platoon 276th Engineer Combat Battalion, 1 platoon (LE) 502nd Engineer Light Ponton Company, 1 platoon 994th Engineer Treadway Bridge Company, 10 DUKW'S 460th Amphibious Truck Company, and 3 tank dozers 738th Tank Battalion, was attached to 1st Infantry Division for Roer River crossing, reverting back to former units on 25 February. On 28 February, the 299th Engineer Combat Battalion with one and one-half platoons of the 998th Engineer Treadway Bridge Company was put under Corps control, and one company of the battalion was attached to the 14th Cavalry Group where it remained the balance of the month.

2. Operations

Principal engineer operations for the month of February consisted of assisting the advance of the attacking divisions by maintenance and clearance of roads, bridge construction, and mine clearing.

a. Road Maintenance

The month of February was marked by rainy weather which greatly added to some bad road conditions that were already affected by the snow of the previous month. Traffic necessarily had to be regulated and directed onto passable minor roads while main supply roads were repaired. In the Third Army area the foundations of macadam roads would not carry the necessary Corps traffic from and to the rear and this was also found to be true upon arrival within the First Army area. While in the former area, it was found necessary to supplement the work of supporting engineers with civilians. Approximately two hundred civilians began work of draining and providing ditches for the road from Arlon to Bastogne during the second week. While special attention was put on drainage, gravel and rock material was continuously hauled by Corps Engineers in both areas. Conditions of roads continued to improve while in First Army area and during the last week of the month great improvement was made, aided by more suitable weather conditions.

b. Bridging

During the period of operation in the Bastogne Area, five Bailey Bridges, totaling 510 feet, no treadway bridges, and a total of 760 feet of timber bridging were constructed. The timber bridges were constructed to replace bailey and treadway bridges and for short

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spans when time permitted that type of construction rather than the use of tactical bridges.

In the Aachen Area, four long bailey bridges, totaling 560 feet, one treadway bridge of 24 feet, one infantry support bridge of 96 feet, and two foot bridges, each 96 feet long, were constructed. No timber bridges were reported built during the month. All bridges except one 80 foot Bailey and the Treadway were used by Corps for crossing the Roer River. The very limited number of roads to crossing sites, the steep hills on both sides of the river, and the fact that the stream was swift and at flood stage required considerable planning and reconnaissance. Gates on the dam of the lower lake and a ruptured penstock leading from an upper lake, both blown by the Germans, made it necessary that river gages be established to determine when normal water level would be reached along the Roer River.

c. Mines

Only local minefields were laid during the period, being normally performed by the divisional engineer battalions. In the Bastogne area and the area SE of Aachen, many friendly and enemy minefields were located and were either cleared or marked by the support battalions. In the latter area, there were 310 friendly minefields and 138 enemy minefields reported. Roads, including shoulders, were cleared by divisional engineers of mines and Corps engineers extended the clearance to include 20 feet outside the shoulders, main turnouts, and areas as required.

d. Camouflage

During the period attention was directed to replenishing camouflage nets which units had not received of their authorized allowances, or those which needed replacement. Snow suits which were used the previous month were collected for cleaning and storage. At the beginning of the period, a detail consisting of one sergeant and three men from the 602nd Engineer Camouflage Battalion were attached to the Engineer Section for assistance in camouflage work. Upon arrival with First Army, "B" Company, 602nd Engineer Camouflage Battalion supported the work of Corps in camouflage.

e. Map Reproduction and Supply

The small reproduction detachment consisting of six men with one press and one camera truck remained with Corps until its movement to First Army zone. Then upon attachment of the 672nd Engineer Topographic Company on 17 February, the survey platoon of this company was immediately given appropriate work assignment with the Corps Artillery. Reproduction jobs consisted of charts, special photomaps,

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special road maps, special defense overprints, terrain studies, town plans, and other miscellaneous illustrations. A map depot detachment consisting of one officer and nine enlisted men attached to Corps Headquarters provided maps for Corps troops, including divisions and distributed approximately 70,000 maps during the period.

3. Annexes

No. 2a - This map shows bridges constructed in the Bastogne Area and the main routes cleared and maintained.

No. 2b - This map shows Corps lateral boundaries, division rear boundaries, forward boundaries of engineer support and also location of engineer units in Bastogne area. The forward boundary of engineer support is the line in rear of which Corps engineer units perform all engineer work, thereby relieving the divisional battalions of responsibility of a large portion of their area.

No. 2c - Same as 2b above except it pertains to area southeast of Aachen.

No. 2d - Same as 2a above except it pertains to area southeast of Aachen.

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SECTION IX, AFTER ACTION REPORT

SIGNAL SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

1. Owing to the rapid advance during January, early February found the Corps with a large and complicated wire net. Advantage was taken of the comparatively static situation during the first twelve days of the month to simplify and improve this wire system. Melting snow and ice caused considerable difficulty in maintaining the talking quality of wire circuits and this trouble was accentuated by the length of the lines. This period was also marked by a determined and successful effort to reclaim as much wire as possible to relieve the current shortage.

2. When III Corps was reassigned to First Army, 12 February 1945, the Corps wire system was taken over by VIII Corps, and the Pigeon and Photographic Sections reverted to their parent Third Army units. In addition, the carrier and very high frequency radio equipment, used by Corps on a loan basis, was returned to Third Army. Upon arrival at Zweifall, Germany, the wire net of the XVIII Airborne Corps was taken over exactly as it then existed. However, much of the wire construction did not meet the standards of this headquarters and extensive repairs were made on the lines to eliminate excessive ground leakage in order that carrier equipment could be used in conjunction with land lines. First Army issued carrier equipment to replace that returned to Third Army and as rapidly as the wire circuits were rehabilitated this equipment was put into use.

3. Because the Corps was placed under radio silence during and immediately after its move, radio did not play an active part in Corps communications until 25 February, at which time radio silence was lifted and the normal Corps nets established. The lifting of radio silence also made the very high frequency radio circuits available for use with carrier equipment whenever land lines failed.

4. The Corps attack 25 February 1945, presented the same problem encountered and solved during the Bastogne operation of the previous month -- with the added complication of a river crossing during the attack. A special wire circuit employing spiral four cable had previously been laid to each of the bridge points to report on the water level and to control the crossing itself. These cables were later extended across the Roer River suspended on number nine messenger, upstream from the bridges, and furnished the initial communication to units on the east bank.

5. The end of the month found all the major subordinate units on the east bank of the Roer River, firmly linked to III Corps Headquarters by wire, very high frequency radio and radio circuits and ground work done to vigorously support any future rate of advance with all means of communications.

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6. Message Center operation was continuous during February. Teletype traffic continued light, facsimile equipment was not used, and the bulk of the Message Center traffic consisted of messenger dispatches. Traffic by all means averaged 2485 items a day. In addition to the scheduled and special motor messenger service, Flight "C" of the 153d Air Liaison Squadron was attached to this headquarters to provide special messenger service to Army and adjoining corps and to divisions when an air strip was available.

7. Cryptographic work increased after the corps was assigned to First Army owing to the fact that army policy prohibited the classifying of wire circuits of any type as secret. Since almost all messages are classified as secret, this policy, in effect, made it necessary to encipher the bulk of message center traffic transmitted by wire.

8. Pigeons were available and were furnished the 1st and 78th Infantry Divisions.

9. The 3259th Signal Service Company was assigned to this headquarters and arrived the day before the headquarters departed Haut Martelange for Zweifall. It was decided that until the company had gained experience during actual operations it would be advisable to use the services of the Signal Service Company of the VII Corps; arrangements were made through the Army Signal Intelligence Service for VII Corps to furnish Corps G-2 with signal intelligence data until the reliability of the 3259th Signal Service Company could be established.

10. Detachment 3, 166th Signal Photographic Company, accompanied the Corps Headquarters to Zweifall, Germany, at which point Detachment A, 166th Signal Photographic Company relieved the Third Army personnel, thus insuring continuous photographic coverage of corps activities.

For the Commanding General:

J. H. Phillips
J. H. PHILLIPS,
Colonel, G.S.C.,
Chief of Staff.

7 Inclosures:

- #1 - G-1 Journal
- #2 - G-2 Journal
- #3 - G-3 Journal
- #4 - G-4 Journal
- #5 - Engr Journal
- #6 - Ltrs, Special
& General Orders
- #7 - Journal, Hq & Hq Btry,
III Corps Arty.

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