

HQ 127TH ABN ENGINEER BN
APO 468

11 AIRB DIV

12 January 1945

Subject: K-2 Operation (20 Oct 44 to 25 Dec 44) 127th
Airborne Engineer Battalion

To : Commanding General, 11th Airborne Division,
APO 468 Attention: Adjutant General

The following is an outline of the activities of this unit during the period 20 Oct 44 to 25 Dec 44 (K-2 operation).

During the entire month of October 1944 while still located at Oro Bay, New Guinea, the Battalion was engaged in logging operations and in construction of fifteen (15) prefabricated parachute storage buildings.

Battalion boarded the S S Monrovia at Oro Bay and on 11 November-1944 departed for Leyte Island in the Philippines arriving there at San Pedro Bay on 18 November 1944. The voyage was without incident. Ship's administration was shared with Adjutant of 188th Glider Infantry Regiment.

On arrival at San Pedro Bay the following engineering projects were undertaken: maintenance of the Beach Road and construction of bridge and road to the south access road with aid of personnel from other units in the Division; construction of L-4 airstrip and erecting of prefabricated parachute storage sheds, maintenance of Division access road, setting up and operating of water points, the construction of a parachute drying tower, clearance of maintenance area for 38,400 square feet of tentage, the operation of the Division sanitary dump, maintenance and installation of electrical systems and generators in the Division rear area.

The Battalion less Company B on 29 November 1944 moved to the Division forward echelon near San Pablo Strip #1, vicinity of Burauen, Leyte, and undertook the maintenance of the airstrip road and Division access road. Water points were established in Burauen and at San Pablo. One platoon of Company B moved to San Pablo.

JUL 24 1946
23787
Copy 2

Incl 3

311-ENG-0.3

K-2 Operation (continued)

On 3 December 1944 twenty (20) enlisted men and one officer from the first platoon of Company C jumped from L-4's and L-5's at the Manarawat airstrip. Men jumped with necessary equipment to improve and maintain the strip preparatory to evacuation of casualties. The following afternoon the first casualty was evacuated by L-4.

On 6 December 1944 one platoon of Company A was ordered to set up a defense at west end of San Pablo airstrip #1 to guard against a possible breakthrough by the enemy. At about 1840 that day approximately one hundred fifty (150) enemy parachutists jumped on the east end of the strip. The Battalion Commander was then ordered to protect the Division CP. He took over the troops in the area and set out a perimeter at the order of the Chief of Staff of the 11th Airborne Division. The mission was dual: to protect the Division CP and to drive the Japs off the strip. Troops were organized so as to use the Engineer Battalion for the attack on the strip the following morning. The 674th FA Bn was to assist in the defense of the Division CP if able to get forward in time for such defense. The service troops were placed under the command of Lt Col Farren. These troops consisted of Division Headquarters Company, signal Company. The Military Police platoon was attached to the Engineers.

At daylight the next morning the Battalion moved out and met Lt Col Hoske and his Battalion at the crossroads of the Dulag-Burauen Road and the airstrip access road. The Engineer Battalion consisted of Company C less one platoon and Company A minus one platoon at the airstrip with one platoon of Company B attached. Company A was under the command of Captain Canary of the Engineers and Company C under the command of Lt Deis, also of the Engineers. The Engineer Battalion was under the command of Major Eisenberg, Executive Officer. Before attacking the enemy, two plans had been drawn up. The first plan consisted of an unaided attack by the Engineers; the second plan included the assistance of the 674th FA Bn, should that unit arrive in time for the attack. Since the 674th FA Bn did arrive in time for such assistance, the second plan of attack was adopted. Lt. Col Farren and Service Troops were held in reserve to defend Division CP. The Engineers and the Artillery formed a provisional regiment under the command of Lt Col Davis. The regiment moved forward to attack the strip, the Engineer Battalion on the left and the 674th on the right. The platoon of Company A which had been set up with machine guns the day previously were contacted and found to be intact and ready for action.

K-2 Operation (continued)

The principal resistance was encountered on the west half of the strip. The Battalion used an Engineer company to envelop the enemy right or west flank. There was no communication except by runner. Company A executed the envelopment as far as they could until they had advanced to the line of fire from Company C at which time they swung to the north. The Engineer Battalion advanced a distance of approximately 300 yards north of the strip when they ran out of food, water and ammunition. The 674th FA Bn pushed forward 700 yards north of the strip. Shortly after the order for envelopment, Lt Col Davis directed the Engineer Battalion to secure the west half of the strip and the 674th FA Bn the east half of the strip. Lt Col Hoska closed the gap between the Artillery and Engineers with a strong patrol.

Colonel Hildebrand arrived at about 0900 to take command and directed an attack at 1015. Shortly thereafter radio communication was established and the situation with regard to food, water and ammunition was determined. The Battalion Commander recommended against an attack and Colonel Hildebrand withdrew the provisional regiment into a perimeter in defense of the strip. The action that night was confined to manning the perimeter. Considerable inefficient grenade and mortar fire was used by the enemy. The following morning the Engineers were relieved. Lt Col Hoska took command and secured the strip with his battalion.

As a result of the action the Engineer Battalion suffered the following casualties:

Pfc William G Bowen, 39 200 525, Company C	KIA
Pfc George M Davis Jr, 39 326 310, Company C	DOW
Pvt Charles S Wylie, 34 606 950, Company C	DOW
Sgt Lloyd L Peters, 39 326 457, Company C	DOW
Tec 5 Robert G Mayotte, 39 559 455, Company C	KIA
Pfc Richard D Higgens, 35 094 306, Company C	KIA
Pfc Norman C Kristensen, 39 201 152, Company A	KIA
Tec 5 Doyle R Lawrence, 39 462 585, Company A	KIA
Pvt John J O'Malley, 32 815 758, H & S Company	DOW
Sgt James R Brown, 36 643 036, Company C	LWA
Pvt Theodore J Morrison 37 174 641, Company C	LWA
Pvt Fred Brooks Jr, 32 760 807, Company C	SWA
Pvt Thomas Shoen Jr, 39 283 593, Company C	SWA

K-2 Operation (continued)

Robert H Deis, 1st Lt, 01 101 406, Company C	SWA
Tec 5 Douglas L Beeson, 39 200 744, Company C	LWA
Pfc Arthur J Berube Jr, 36 570 526, Company C	SWA
Pfc Charles J Burke, 32 765 541, Company C	LWA
Pvt Paul A Ernyei, 35 538 209, Company C	LWA
Tec 5 Melvin J Skonseng, 37 550 562, Company C	LWA
Pvt Robert Bauman, 33 587 961, Company B	LWA
Cpl Charles E Gunter, 35 093 584, Company A	LWA
Pfc Charles A Plogger Jr, 33 532 982, Company A	LWA
Pfc Wilbur F Campbell, 35 093 032, Company A	LWA
Pvt John J Crimmins, 32 816 458, Company A	LWA
Pvt Eugene A Desimone, 12 095 222, Company A	LWA*
Tec 5 Irvin B McDaniel, 38 399 974, Company A	LWA

*Pvt Desimone later died 13 Dec 44 Result of Pneumonia

On 8 December 1944 the Engineer Battalion returned to bivouac area near San Pablo airstrip #1. Battalion was given the defense of the northwest sector of Division CP perimeter.

On 9 December 1944 Lt Col Davis, Battalion Commander, called meeting of all Engineer troops in area and commended the Battalion for its aggressiveness and daring in the field against the enemy in the recent action on the airstrip. Normal Engineer operations were immediately resumed with Company A being assigned the maintenance of the airstrip access road and Company C the Division access road. On 10 December Battalion furnished one platoon of Company B for patrol and perimeter guard for the 6th ASP ammunition dump after reported enemy action in that area. No enemy were contacted. Company C furnished 15-man guard for truck convoy transporting the 188th Glider Infantry troops.

On 11 December two platoons of Company C, one platoon of Company B and one platoon of Company A began installing tactical and protective wire around the Fifth Air Force and 44th General Hospital installations at Burauen. Seven thousand (7,000) yards of wire was thus laid.

On the 16th of December two squads of Company B moved from Division rear echelon to San Pablo airstrip #1 bivouac area. Company B made preparations to begin improvement of carabao trail from Burauen to Manarawat. On the following day Company B left for Manarawat but were assigned the improvement of the trail from Manarawat to Mahonag.

X-2 Operation (continued)

Company C returned to area after completion of its wire-stringing project. On 19 December one squad of Company A furnished security for carabao train which left Burauen for Manarawat.

On 19 December, the Battalion was given the mission of constructing a trail for the evacuation of litter cases from Mahonag to Albuera. The Battalion (-) moved around via Dulag-Abuyog-Baybay and went into bivouac one mile south of the mouth of the Talisayan River. Aerial and ground reconnaissance discovered a Japanese supply trail running from the mouth of the Talisayan River to Mahonag, so that the task was reduced to improving the trail for ambulances up to the foothills and assisting in litter evacuation to the ambulances by trail improvement from the foothills to Mahonag. An evacuation station was set up and operated under supervision of Captain Miller, Battalion Surgeon. With Company A constructing the ambulance road, and Company C improving the trail over the mountains to Mahonag, the mission was completed on 23 December 1944.

Company B plus one squad Company A joined the Battalion on 24 December, having crossed the mountains from Burauen to Albuera, improving the trail as they went.

On 25 December 1944 the Battalion moved from Albuera to Bito Beach having accomplished its missions in the forward areas. The main body of the Battalion was returned to the rear echelon with only a skeleton staff remaining at San Pablo to supervise Division utilities and access roads using civilian labor.

In recognition of their personal actions in the period covered by this report, the following awards and decorations have been made to date.

Silver Star Medal

1st Lt ROBERT H DEIS
2nd Lt WAYNE P MISEMER
S/Sgt Sidney Slater
Sgt James R Brown
Sgt Lloyd L Peters
Tec 5 Doyle R Lawrence
Tec 5 Melvin J Skonseng
Pfc William G Bowen

K-2 Operation (continued)

Bronze Star Medal

Lt Col D S DAVIS
Pfc Charles C Angell
Pfc Harold E McGuffey
Pfc Merle E Olson

Purple Heart

1st Lt JASPER C HAGGERTY
1st Sgt Charles E Bradley
S/Sgt Elbert M Johnson
S/Sgt Ralph L Osborne
Cpl Rwymond C Fortier Jr
Cpl Jack A Lawrence
Tec 5 Bob E Bowers
Tec 5 Ralph J Fischer
Tec 5 William M Irving
Pfc Wilbur F Campbell
Pfc Henry R Swindler
Pvt Tully W Pope
Pvt Lester F Smith
Pvt Harold A Young Jr

Recommendations not yet on General Order.

Distinguished Service Cross

1st Lt. PAUL J PERGAMO

Bronze Star Medal

Major PAUL R ELLIS
Capt MERLIN H WHITEHEAD
Capt THOMAS S MILLER

As a result of their actions against the enemy the following promotions have been recommended.

To Be 1st Lt

2d Lt ANTHONY P D'AUGUSTINE
2d Lt ISRAEL J GRAFF
2d Lt EDGAR A HENSON

To Be 1st Lt

K-2 Operation (continued)

To Be 2d Lt

Tech Sgt Alan J Bergh

For the Commanding Officer:

DOUGLAS C DAVIS
Lt Col 127 Abn Engr Bn
Commanding

OFFICIAL:

Rowland R. Collins
ROWLAND R COLLINS
2d Lt 127 Abn Engr Bn
Adjutant

HQ 127th A/B ENGINEER BN
11th Airborne Division
Camp Mackall, NC

February 25 1943

SPECIAL ORDERS

NUMBER 1

1. Captain VICTOR P BACOUS 092960 in addition to his other duties is designated Commanding Officer of Hq & Sv Co effective this date.

2. The following named officers assigned this Battalion per par 6 SO #1 Hq 11th A/B Division Camp Mackall NC 25 Feb 1943 are assigned duties as indicated effective this date:

Captain	KENNETH H KEIM	0-334482	Comdg Co A
Captain	GEORGE H G EISENBERG	0-31-591	Comdg Co C
1st Lt	ANDERSON M KINGHORN	0-341225	Comdg Co B
1st Lt	EDWIN F SMITH JR	0-325548	Comdg Asst Div Engr

3. The following named officers assigned this battalion per par 6 SO #1 Hq 11th Airborne Division Camp Mackall NC Feb 25 1943 are assigned to Co C and will report to Commanding Officer for duty effective this date:

1st Lt	WALTER L BRUGH	0-456326	
1st Lt	CHARLES E WATKINS	0-444880	
2nd Lt	JACK T CLIFT	0-1102672	
2nd Lt	DAVID G MURRAY	0-446091	
2nd Lt	BENJAMIN S BCOTH	0-1103894	
2nd Lt	WARN th L ROSCOE	0-1104375	

4. 2nd Lt ROBERT H DEIS 0-1101406 assigned this Battalion per par 17 SO # 41 HQ ABC 17 Feb 1943 is assigned company C and will report to Commanding Officer for duty this date.

5. The following named officers assigned this Battalion per par 13 SO #1 Hq 11th A/B Division Camp Mackall NC 25 Feb 1943 are assigned to Medical Detachment and will report for duty this date:

1st Lt	THOMAS S MILLER	0-1695414	
1st Lt	MATTEO CARADONNA	0-507988	

By order of Lt Col DAVIS:

OFFICIAL:

ALLEN C SMITH
1st Lt 127th A/B Engr Bn
Adjutant

ALLEN C SMITH
1st Lt 127th A/B Engr Bn
Adjutant

A CERTIFIED TRUE COPY:

Joe P. Lewis
JOE P LEWIS
1st Lt CE
Unit Historian

HEADQUARTERS 11TH AIRBORNE DIVISION
Camp Mackall North Carolina

February 25, 1943

SPECIAL ORDERS)
:
NUMBER 1)

*****EXTRACT*****

6. The fol O are asgd to the 127th A/B Engr Bn:

Lt Col	DOUGLAS S DAVIS	018985 CE	Div Engr O
Major	HENRY S BEELER	0286503	
Captain	VICTOR P BACCUS	0329260	
Captain	GEORGE H G EISENBERG	0310591	
Captain	KENNETH H KEIM	0334482	
1st Lt	WALTER L BRUGH	0456326	
1st Lt	ANDERSON M KINGHORN	0341255	
1st Lt	ALLEN C SMITH	0453202	
1st Lt	EDWIN F SMITH JR	0325548	
1st Lt	CHARLES F WATKINS	0444880	
1st Lt	MERLIN H WHITEHEAD	0355352	
2nd Lt	JACK T CLIFT	01102672	
2nd Lt	DAVID G MURRAY	0445091	
2nd Lt	BENJAMIN S BOOTH	01103894	
2nd Lt	WARNE L ROSCOE	01104375	

*****EXTRACT*****

13. The fol O having been asgd to the 11th A/B Div are atchd to units indicated:

MEDICAL AND DENTAL

1st Lt	MATTEO CARADONNA	0507988
1st Lt	THOMAS S MILLER	01693414

By command of Major General SWING:

F. W. FARRELL
Colonel G.S.C.
Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL:

/s/E.G. HOYT
/t/E.G. HOYT
Lt Col A.G.D.
Adjutant General

DIST: "A" & "B"
plus 5 copies TAG

A TRUE EXTRACT COPY:

Joe P. Zlonis
JOE P ZLONIS
1st Lt CE
S-2

HQ 127th A/B ENGINEER BN
11th Airborne Division
Camp Mackall, NC

February 25, 1943

GENERAL ORDER

NUMBER 1

I. Activation of 127th A/B Engineer Battalion.--
Pursuant to directive contained in section I, General
Orders No. 1, Headquarters 11th A/B Division, Camp
Mackall, North Carolina, February 25, 1943, the 127th
A/B Engineer Battalion is activated at 0001EWT February
25, 1943.

II. Assumption of command.--pursuant to directive
contained in paragraph 6, Special Orders No. 1, Head-
quarters 11th A/B Division, Camp Mackall, North Carolina,
February 25, 1943, the undersigned assumes command of the
127th A/B Engineer Battalion.

III. Appointment of Staff.--The following appointments
to the staff, this headquarters, are announced:

Executive Officer - Major H. S. Beeler
(O-286503), 127th A/B Engineer Battalion
Adjutant (S-1) - 1st Lt Allen C. Smith
(O-453402), 127th A/B Engineer Battalion
Intelligence Officer (S-2) and Plans and
Training Officer (S-3) - 1st Lt M. H. Whitehead
(O-355352), 127th A/B Engineer Battalion
Supply Officer (S-4) - Captain V.P. Baccus
(O-329620), 127th A/B Engineer Battalion

D. C. Davis
Lt. Col. 127th A/B Engr Bn
Commanding

Distribution:

- 2- each officer concerned
- 1 - 201 file each officer concerned
- 1 - each unit 11th A/B Division
- 2 - each company
- 5 - CG 11th A/B Division
- 10 - file
- 5 - T.A.G. 11th A/B Division

A TRUE COPY:

Joe P. Zlonis
JOE P ZLONIS
1st Lt CE
Unit Historian

ORIGINAL UNIT

The 127th Airborne Engineer Battalion was constituted on the inactive list of the Army per AG 320.2 (10-31-42) OB-I-GN dated 12 November 1942 with activation scheduled to be at Hoffman, North Carolina (Later named Camp Mackall) on 25 Feb 43 per AG 320.2 (11-24-42) OB-IGN-M dated 27 Nov 42.

The officer cadre for the battalion was selected from the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions, engineer officers of the Parachute School and cadre officers requisitioned from Fort Belvoir and Ft Leonard Wood. Enlisted cadre for the glider elements of the battalion were assigned from the 88th Inf Div, Camp Gruber, Oklahoma, and those for the parachute element from the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions. The major portion of the fillers came from reception centers.

The battalion was activated on 25 February 1943 under the command of Lt Col Davis.

During the calendar year 1947 personnel were acquired from the regular replacement stream and to some extent from transfers from other units in this theater.

Extra Cy.

Incl 2