

HEADQUARTERS
 88TH ORD. BOMB DISPOSAL SQUAD (SEP)
 APO 403, U.S. ARMY

23 March 1945

SUBJECT: Ordnance Unit Records

 THRU : Commanding Officer
 41st Ordnance Battalion
 APO 403, U.S. Army

 TO : Office of the Chief of Ordnance
 APO 887, U.S. Army

1. The 88th Ordnance Bomb Disposal Squad (Sep) was activated at the Bomb Disposal Center, Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Md. in 1943. It received excellent training, both scholastic and practical at the Bomb Disposal School, the bombing range at Aberdeen and the experimental range at Edgewood Arsenal, Md. The training was both thorough and interesting from all standpoints.

2. This unit left for overseas duty on 13 May 1944 from Boston, Mass. arriving in England 24 May 1944 where we were engaged in requisitioning and the picking up of organizational equipment as well as some Bomb Disposal work for the British. We were deeply impressed with the speed and precision of the supply system used to equip our troops.

3. We left England for France 6 July 1944 and arrived at Utah Beach 7 July 1944 to join our parent organization the 24th Ordnance Battalion of VIII Corps, then at St. Saveur Le Vicompte. Work commenced immediately with one nasty job of cleaning burned and damaged German ammunition from a German horse drawn ammunition train that had been strafed by our aircraft killing some 56 horses in a small ravine. The stench of these dead horses that had been lying in the sun for about two weeks was a good start in breaking us in for what was yet to come.

4. We were heavily shelled and bombed in the vicinity of Le Haye de Puits and camouflage discipline was maintained to perfection.

5. Attached to 313th Ordnance Group, but remained in support of VIII Corps and continued to move along with them to Les Perques (095.025), Sartilly (230.238), Le Croix Avranches (250.020), then to Plerguer (905.000). Upon request of Gen. Woods of the 4th Armored was flown to Vannes airport to defuze 14 German time bombs on runways there - was forced back by enemy action, but succeeded in getting through by following an armored column the following day 9 August 1944. Succeeded in clearing airfield of bombs in addition to the bombs stacked near the hangers. Notified to join the 41st Ordnance Battalion located near Le Mans (521.751) at completion of job. Officer awarded Bronze Star Medal for work at Vannes.

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 By Fernell NARS, Date 8-30-87


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6. Moved along with 41st Ord. Bn. and the advance of the Third U.S. Army through France, clearing countless bombs, grenades and munitions in the path of the advance sometimes up with the Infantry where we were subjected to small arms and machine gun fire. Moved into Nancy, France with elements of XIII Corps to remove countless unexploded bombs, mines and explosive charges in that city, much of the work done while under sniper and artillery fire. Officer received Oak Leaf Cluster to Bronze Star Medal for the work done in Nancy, France.

7. Upon urgent request of RTO through 41st Ord. Bn. proceeded to St. Mihiel to dispose of burned and dangerous ammunition strewn over the railroad tracks from a train explosion at that city. Continued to support XIII Corps through Chateau-Salins, Morhange, Sarralbe, then joined 41st Ord. Bn. for push north toward Bastogne, Belgium. Ordered to support III Corps clearing unexploded bombs, dud artillery projectiles and explosives. Two men wounded 5 January 1945 at Bastogne by enemy artillery fire while working on unexploded German bomb in CP of "Bamboo". Awarded the Purple Heart. 250 Kg German bomb entered CP of III Corps failing to explode while officer was away working on unexploded German bombs on main RR supply route at Signeul, Belgium. The men improvised equipment and defuzed and removed German bomb at III Corps CP in Arlon, Belgium 1 January 1945. For meritorious achievement these three men T/Sgt. Richard W. Knox, Sgt. Arthur Schaeffer and T/5 Michael G. Mitchell were awarded the Bronze Star Medal. Later T/5 John B. Rogers was wounded while removing a dud German artillery shell from a house in Arlon, Belgium. He was awarded the Purple Heart. T/5 Leonard I. Bishop was awarded the Bronze Star Medal in lieu of the Silver Star for heroic achievement in Bastogne. 28 February 1945 bivouaced in Arlon, Belgium working to clean up city of unexploded bombs and shells. Awarded the Meritorious Service Unit Plaque for service from 10 August 1944 to 16 January 1945.

8. This organization has been well pleased with the close cooperation and help it has received both materially and administratively from the 82nd Ordnance Group and the 41st Ordnance Battalion on problems that have arisen during the course of the war. It is felt that Bomb Disposal Squads could operate to a better advantage if the complement were 10 or 12 men instead of 7 to take care of the large amounts of enemy ammunition we often encounter. It is further felt that an occasional conference of the Bomb Disposal Officers should be held at the office of the Staff Bomb Disposal Officer to exchange information and express ideas to facilitate the operation and function of Bomb Disposal in the forward area.


ROBERT H. PALMATARY
Capt. Ord. Dept.,
Commanding

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