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HEADQUARTERS FIRST U. S. ARMY SIGNAL SERVICE
APO 230

U. S. ARMY

10 January 1945

319.1 (SIG).

SUBJECT: Report of Work Accomplished for First U. S. Army by the 40th Signal Construction Battalion.

TO : Signal Officer, Twelfth Army Group, APO 655, U. S. Army.

1. After the German breakthrough in the VIII Corp's sector, it became apparent that it would be impossible to build a safe wire route to VIII Corp Headquarters with the construction troops then at our disposal. Major Driver indicated that the 40th Signal Construction Battalion could be placed at our disposal and at about 181200 December, Major Driver was requested to dispatch one company of the 40th to the vicinity of Dinant to construct two spiral-four cables from Dinant to Neufchateau.

2. Following is a record of events subsequent to our request for the use of the 40th Signal Construction Battalion:

19 December -

Commanding Officer, 40th Signal Construction Battalion received orders at 0130 from Twelfth Army Group to report to First Army for temporary duty with one Construction Company and Headquarters Company to move immediately from Aachen, Germany. Major Cobb reported to the Signal Section, First Army. Job No. 927 was assigned, calling for two spiral-four cables from Dinant to Neufchateau; a distance of approximately fifty (50) miles, for Master-Monarch circuits. Headquarters and B Company moved to Namur, Belgium, obtained ten truckloads of cable and supplies from Army Signal Depot No. 4 at Verviers, Belgium and prepared to start the job at daylight of 20 December. It was decided to also put A Company on the same job.

20 December -

Job No. 927 started by B Company. Company A moved from Aachen, Germany to Namur, Belgium, picked up six truckloads of cable at Depot No. 4 and prepared for work the following day.

21 December -

VIII Corps was removed from command of First Army and VII Corps was moved from the left flank of the Army to the right flank. Orders were given to the 40th Signal Construction Bn. to stop work on the Dinant - Neufchateau Cables. Job No. 927 was about ninety percent complete when

SECRET

SECRET

319.1 (SIG) - Report of Work Accomplished
by 40th Sig. Const. Bn. - 10 Jan. 45 (Cont'd)

work was stopped at 1200 as ordered. The entire battalion prepared to move again and at 2200 moved out to rendezvous near Bommershaven, Belgium; a distance of approximately forty miles, with the balance of the night being spent in the vehicles. Orders were issued to Major Cobb at about midnight to construct three spiral-four cables from Huy PTT to a point approximately eight miles south of Huy, a rendezvous with construction teams of the 32d Signal Construction Battalion attached to VII Corps; the exact location of the Corps being unknown at that time. Orders were also given to send one platoon to the assistance of the 35th Signal Construction Battalion in establishing a new Army Command Post in the vicinity of Tongres, Belgium.

22 December -

By 0600 plans were complete for the days work and by daylight all teams were ready to start work. The following jobs were completed:

| | | | |
|------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Job No. (No No.) | Master-Maroon Air Strip | 1 Spiral-four Cable | Approximately 3 miles |
| Job No. 939 | Master-VHF Site | 5 Spiral-four Cables | Approximately 2 miles |
| Job No. 940 | Huy PTT-Jayhawk | 3 Spiral-four Cables | Approximately 3 miles |

One section was used to assist the 35th Signal Construction Battalion in placing twenty five-pair cables from FK-2 terminal in vicinity of Tongres to the Master wire head. All teams worked until 2200 with bright moonlight making the work feasible.

23 December -

Job of placing 5 pair cables continued.

| | | | |
|-------------|----------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Job No. 941 | Master-Huy PTT | 2 Spiral-four Cables | Approximately 25 miles |
|-------------|----------------|----------------------|------------------------|

One of these cables (No. 330) was completed at 2300.

24 December -

Following jobs were completed:

Job of placing 5 pair cables from FK-2 to wire head.

| | | |
|-------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Job No. 941 | Master-Huy PTT | Spiral-four Cables |
|-------------|----------------|--------------------|

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| Job No. 956 | Master-Security Command | 1 Field Wire | Approximately 2 miles |
|-------------|-------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|

SECRET

SECRET

319.1 (SIG) - Report of Work Accomplished
by 40th Sig. Const. Bn. - 10 Jan. 45 (Cont'd)

| | | | |
|-------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|
| Job No. 962 | Master-P & PW Hqs. | 2 Field Wires | Approximately $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles |
|-------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|

Work was started on rehabilitating six open wire circuits on existing German pole line between Tongres and St. Trond and the connecting of these circuits to the wireheads at each end by spiral-four cable.

25 December -

One platoon, A Company and three officers temporarily attached to 50th Signal Battalion (VII Corps) to assist in spiral-four and field wire construction in the Corps rear area. Job No. 959 - Master-Master Rear - 3 Spiral-four cables - Approximately 6 miles. This cable was placed between end of rehabilitated open wire and Master Rear at St. Trond. Open wire rehabilitation also completed this date.

26 December -

Job No. 983 Red Line Test-Macadam 2 Spiral-four Cables Approximately 21 miles.

This job was completed 270100 with teams returning to battalion area at 270500.

27 December -

Job No. 979 Master-Master Rear 1 Spiral-four Cable Approximately 15 miles
This cable was placed on German pole line carrying rehabi- litated open wire circuits

28 December -

Equipment policed and men given baths and rest.

29 December - 8 January -

Job No. 980 20 wire open wire line built from Master to Red Line Test. Approximate distance seventeen (17) miles. All poles were obtained by dismantling German lines or from local sources of supply found by the Battalion.

3. The supply situation during the above was difficult due to the distances involved between depots, the bivouac area, and the jobs, and the fact that the depots were being moved and some items were in transit. During the three week period covered by this report, despite icy roads and fog, the Battalion hauled

SECRET

SECRET

319.1 (SIG)- Report of Work Accomplished
by 40th Sig. Const. Bn. - 10 Jan 45 (Cont'd)

approximately:

| | | |
|------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1500 reels | Spiral-four Cable | Requiring 30 truck days |
| 150 reels | Field Wire | Requiring 3 truck days |
| 18 miles | Pole line material | Requiring 36 truck days |
| 500 poles | | Requiring 20 truck days |

4. The 40th Signal Construction Battalion has assisted this headquarters greatly during a critical period and this help is appreciated. There are other moves imminent and it is requested that the 40th Signal Construction Battalion remain under our direction until the situation has stabilized.

5. Request acknowledgement by return of receipts attached hereto.

For the Signal Officer:

V. R. Pogue
V. R. POGUE,
Colonel, Signal Corps,
Executive Officer.

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