

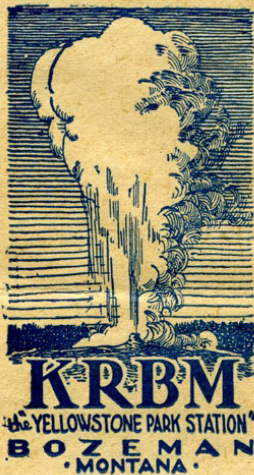
MONTANA BROADCASTERS

(SALES ORGANIZATION)

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STATION	DATE	TIME	ANNOUNCER
K PFA	July 7, 1945		

FOR

HEADQUARTERS
COMMUNICATIONS ZONE
EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS
UNITED STATES ARMY

RELEASE ON RECEIPT
NUMBER: 82484

87th TASK FORCE SET PACE FROM RHINE EASTWARD

WITH THE 87TH INFANTRY DIVISION IN GERMANY -- "Task Force Sundt" -- a special fighting unit made up of tank destroyers, tanks, reconnaissance troops, engineers and infantrymen from Major General Frank L. Culin Jr's 87th "Golden Acorn" Infantry Division was greatly responsible for the division's rapid drive from the Rhine River to the Czechoslovakian frontier.

In six days time the fast moving task force commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Harald S. Sundt, 1701 Eighth Street, Las Vegas, New Mexico, covered 109 miles in six days, captured 58 towns, took 1,344 German prisoners of war, and liberated approximately 5,000 Allied prisoners of war in their drive across Germany.

In one place the task force rushed to a bridge which Germans were preparing to blow. The nazis had left two 500 pound bombs and demolition charged by the bridge. Corporal Martin E. Wappler, 5709 South East Center Street, Portland, Oregon, rushed out on the bridge, removed the demolition charges, threw them into the river and ran back to safety from enemy fire in nearby hills.

Speeding across Germany, Task Force Sundt isolated pockets of prisoners, raced down roads following the retreating-German troops and stopped long enough to mop up major resistance and leave infantrymen to take care of prisoners.

At one time during the rapid drive, the task force hit an unfordable stream where the only standing bridge had been blown. While armored cars and tanks were temporarily halted, the men of Company "B", 312th Engineer Battalion of the 87th Division,

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searched for a crossing place. Lieutenant Leigh J. Tobin, Channing, Michigan, several enlisted men and Captain Richard D. Joy, 5709 South East Center Street, Portland, Oregon, an officer of the 607 th Tank Destroyer Battalion, found an old railroad bridge several miles upstream that the Germans had failed to destroy. Following the procedure that Army engineers used at the Remagen railroad bridge over the Rhine River, Lieutenant Tobin and his platoon of engineers converted the railway bridge for the armored column of the task force.

The column rolled on when the bridge and road approach were completed. The entire operation only took a few hours. In Stadtilm, Germany, the task force freed 600 British prisoners of war, most of whom had been prisoners for five years.

"It really made us feel good to see all those soldiers freed," said First Lieutenant A.P. Smith of 1923 Fifth Street, South East, Canton, Ohio, the executive officer of Company "A", the 735th Tank Battalion, who was in one of the lead tanks that reached the British prisoner camp first. "The sight of seeing all those Allied soldiers rush out to welcome us after so many year of captivity was really touching to all of the men in Task Force Sundt," said the Lieutenant,

Staff members of Colonel Sundt's Task Force who were responsible for the success of the 106 mile drive across Germany were: Major John W. Solomon, 1902 Ocean Way, Laguna Beach, California; Major Grant F. Nelson, 1636 Yale Avenue, Salt Lake City, Utah; Captain Joy; Master Sergeant William J. Daw, 4004 South East Holgat Street, Portland, Oregon; Technical Sergeant William A. Streck, 5715 McPherson Street, St. Louis, Missouri; Technical Sergeant Orno D. Strong, Briggs apartments, Spokane, Washington; Sergeant Henry F. Mortieau, 632 North Hoback Street, Helena, Montana; and Private First Class James H. Strous, 1202½ West Vine Street, Mt. Vernon, Ohio.

Staff Sergeant Frederick A. Martin of 23 Anderson Avenue, Deferi New York; "Once when we were trying to cross a small river, Jerry blew up four successive bridges right under our noses. We nearly

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got to the first one, when kaput, it blew up; we headed for the next one and they kaputed it; then they blew two more. They made a gross and costly error; however when they left a railroad bridge standing. Believe it or not, we managed to get everything across that bridge -- even our armor."



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