WACO DISASTER OPERATION
TEXAS NATIONAL GUARD
11th of May thru 20th of May, 1953
FOUND & BOUGHT SAT. 26 SEP 1960

Another tornado hit Waco
on
Tuesday 13 Oct. 1981 at 12:20 P.M.
WACO DISASTER OPERATION
TEXAS NATIONAL GUARD
11th of May, 1953 thru 20th of May, 1953

At 4:40 P.M. on Monday the 11th day of May, 1953, immediately following a down pour of rain accompanied by egg-size hailstones, a tornado struck with devastating force along a five-mile strip in the City of Waco, Texas. Apparently, the tornado followed a course extending from the southwest City limits, thence in a northeasterly direction into the heart of downtown business district, and continuing across the Brazos river into East Waco. Approximately fifty business buildings in the downtown section collapsed on occupants and shoppers and more than 300 other business houses were damaged. Over fifteen hundred homes in the residential areas were damaged or destroyed. In the downtown area brick walls fell upon occupied and unoccupied automobiles, crushing them beneath brick, stone and other debris. All public utilities in most parts of the City were disrupted and electric lines in the downtown area were destroyed causing electric power to be shut off throughout the City and communication by telephones was impossible. Many gas lines were broken creating a serious fire and explosion hazard.

Within twenty minutes after the tornado struck, Lt. Col. Wiley Stem, Commanding Third Battalion, 143rd Infantry, Texas National Guard, reported to Mayor Ralph Wolf for instructions. Immediately, Mayor Wolf, exercising his powers under the Provisions of Article 583l, Revised Civil Statutes of Texas, requested aid of all units of the Third Battalion, 143rd Infantry, composed of Third Battalion Headquarters Company, Third Battalion Platoon of the 143rd Infantry Medical Company, Company K, and Company M of Waco, Company I of Temple, and Company L of Hillsboro, Texas. In addition Mayor Wolf requested aid of Regimental Headquarters Company, 143rd Infantry and the 220th AAA (RCAT) Detachment of Waco and Headquarters Battery, Battery A and Medical Detachment, 649th AAA Battalion of the 49th Armored Division of Temple, Texas.

Administrative assistants and caretakers on duty at the Waco Armory located at 6th and Franklin Streets were unable to put into operation organization mobilization plans because, as before mentioned, all means of communication were disrupted. Local radio stations were without electric power and unable to transmit and dial telephone lines were destroyed. The roof of the Armory building was badly damaged; all windows were blown out and heavy rains poured into the building. In the vicinity of the Armory, people trapped in debris covered buildings and automobiles were crying for aid and those men on duty at the Armory immediately commenced rescue work.

In rapid succession orders were issued directing Sgt. Harvey J. McKinney, in charge of the vehicle service center located at Blackland Municipal Airport thirteen miles northwest of the Armory, to bring all available army transportation to the Armory to be used for mobilization purposes, rescue work and to augment ambulances in transporting the injured to first aid stations and hospitals; one room of the Armory was designated as a temporary morgue; the main auditorium was organized as an aid station for the injured; supply rooms were opened and instructions issued to uniform all guardsmen as they reported to the Armory and issue weapons. As officers arrived at the Armory, rescue and guard teams of guardsmen were organized. At 6 P.M. an emergency telephone call was put through from a telephone in the outskirts of town to Adjutant General K. L. Berry of Austin, Texas, and he was advised of the disaster which had occurred and of Mayor Wolf’s request for National Guard aid. Thirty minutes later, General Berry advised that Governor Shivers had ratified Mayor Wolf’s action and directed the National Guard to render the aid requested. At approximately 7 P.M. ninety per cent of the officers and men of the Waco units had reported voluntarily to the Armory without formal notice. Lt. Fred Morrison, commanding the Third Battalion Medical platoon of the 143rd Infantry, was placed in charge of directing all first aid activities.

With skill and exhibiting high standards of military proficiency, initial organization for rescue work, patrolling and guard duty within the disaster area was completed by 7:30 P.M. The viciousness of the tornado and the devastation left in its wake is adequately described in a newspaper article appear-
ing in the Waco News Tribune on Tuesday, May 12, 1953, and is quoted as follows:

"Brick and steel buildings crumpled like pasteboard houses; tons of shattered plate glass flew through the storm to cut and slash even the people who took refuge in doors. The tornado hopped and skipped through more than two square miles of retail business houses in the center of the high value district, through manufacturing plants, churches and homes. Wacoans were crushed to death in their parked cars; crushed as they entered buildings to shop; crushed as they dived for the protection of tables and counters. Heaviest damage was to the R. T. Dennis Furniture Company, a five story building at Fifth and Austin where rescue workers were digging out the dead and injured late Monday night. In that area around the City Hall Square, East Waco and out Austin and Franklin to 18th Street, southwest of Webster and Dutton Avenue section, the damages were terrific."

By 6:30 P.M. power had been restored to the radio stations which were located in the west part of Waco and a message went out to the Hillsboro and Temple Units advising them of the mobilization order. By 7:30 P.M. Company I of Temple had assembled in its Armory and was prepared to proceed under the direction of Capt. Edgar Pascasio and by 10 P.M. Company L, commanded by Capt. Thomas Head of Hillsboro, had arrived at its Armory and was prepared to proceed to Waco to engage in the operation. Elements of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 649th AAA AW Battalion, Battery A, 649th AAA AW Battalion and Medical Detachment, 649th AAA AW Battalion under the command of Lt. Col. O. F. Brewster of Temple, Texas arrived in the Waco area at about 11 P.M. and reported to Lt. Col. Wiley Stem for instructions. Advance elements of Company I arrived in Waco at 9 P.M. and by 10:30 P.M. the entire Company had closed in and was assigned its mission. Company L left Hillsboro by truck at 10:15 P.M. and arrived at the outskirts of Waco at 11:10 P.M. where they were met by guides and brought to the National Guard Armory.

Initial areas of responsibility with the mission of engaging in rescue work, patrolling and guard duty was assigned to the units as follows:

Regimental Headquarters Company, 143rd Infantry, commanded by Capt. Roger Cannon,
was assigned the area from Franklin to Washington Streets in the vicinity of the square surrounding the City Hall to include Bridge Street and the bridges crossing the Brazos River on Washington and Bridge Streets.

Third Battalion Headquarters Company, 143rd Infantry, commanded by Capt. John T. Bates, was ordered to rescue work, patrolling and clearing of the area on Austin Avenue between Eighth Street and the City Hall.

Company I, commanded by Capt. Edgar Pascasio, was assigned the area from Washington Street to Webster Street between Fourth and Eighth Streets.

Company K, commanded by Capt. James D. Spurgeon, was assigned the area between First and Sixth Streets on Franklin Avenue.

Company L, commanded by Capt. Thomas Head, assigned the area from First and Franklin to First and Webster, from First and Webster to Fourth and Webster and from Fourth and Webster to Fourth and Franklin.

Company M, commanded by Capt. Hubert A. Simons, was assigned the area in East Waco along Elm Street to include the devastated area between Turner and Myrtle Streets.

The 220th, AAA Detachment, commanded by Lt. Lawrence G. Boyd, was attached to K Company for the operation.

The 649th AAA Detachment was assigned to maintenance of a perimeter coordinated with the State Highway Patrol and local police department along the area from First to Eleventh Streets along Webster Avenue, thence along Eleventh Street to Jefferson Street. The remainder of the perimeter extending down Jefferson Street to the Brazos was maintained by Highway Patrol and local police department.

Throughout the night of May 11th and 12th, tight guard was maintained in the devastated area. All unauthorized personnel were kept out of the area and rescue work proceeded in an organized manner. The injured, as they were dug out of the debris, received first aid treatment at the Armory and were then dispatched to hospitals for further treatment. Along Austin Avenue between Fifth Street and Third Street several Jewelry Stores had been severely damaged and many articles of value were strewn about the sidewalk and were unprotected. A detachment of guardsmen were organized at the Armory for the purpose of gathering all of these articles and storing them in storage vaults at the Armory and the police department. Thousands of dollars worth of valuable merchandise was stored in this manner and protected from pilferers. At 1 A.M. on the morning of the 12th of May, a meeting of the various law enforcing and relief agencies was held at the State Highway Patrol office at 29th and Franklin Avenue. A disaster committee was formed, headed by Mayor Wolf, who assigned the National Guard the mission of maintaining a rigid guard within the devastated area for the purpose of keeping unauthorized civilians and sight-seers out of the area, to prevent looting and pilfering and to continue rescue operations.

At 10 A.M. on Tuesday morning, May 12th, the Highway Patrol, assisted by the local City police, took over the perimeter guard functions and the elements of the 649th Battalion of the 49th Armored Division, commanded by Col. Brewster, were relieved and returned to home station. It was the opinion of Disaster Headquarters that the perimeter could be adequately maintained by the Highway Patrol and City police and the National Guard to police inside the disaster area. However, it developed that additional use of National Guardsmen was necessary to assist in maintaining the perimeter. Shortly after the tornado struck on Monday, May 11th, the perimeter had been established as follows:

From the Brazos River on Webster Street along Webster Street in a westerly direction to Eleventh Street, then north on Eleventh Street to Jefferson Street, thence east on Jefferson Street to the Brazos River.

By noon Tuesday, this area was reduced as follows:

From the Brazos River on Webster west to Eighth Street, thence north along Eighth Street to Columbus Avenue, thence east along Columbus Avenue to the river.

The area within this perimeter was declared to be the disaster area and operations of the National Guard were maintained within this area from Tuesday until 7 A.M. on Wednesday, May 20th. Company M remained on duty in East Waco in the area above mentioned until 4 P.M. on the 13th day of May. Thereafter, motorized patrols of Company M covered the East Waco area.
Orders and instructions of the Commanding Officer are included in this report in the appendix and the manner in which these instructions were carried out is reflected in the daily journal report of each organization. Extracts of these journal reports, it is believed, present a fairly comprehensive picture of the operations. These journal entries are quoted in part and reflect the activities of each organization for the first three days of the operation.

MONDAY, May 11, 1953
Regimental Headquarters Company—
By 6:30 P.M. enough men had arrived at the Armory to begin effective organization and rescue work. Our company received orders to clear the square from Franklin to Washington and the bridge. Heavy cranes and moving equipment began to move into the area about 8 P.M. to commence clearing of debris and to assist in rescue work. Company spent the remainder of the night on the square.

3rd Battalion Headquarters Company—
By 1730 hours, 50% of Headquarters Company had reached the Armory building. They had come down of their own will since all means of communication was knocked out. The first ones to arrive were helping the Red Cross to set up first aid station on the third floor. The men brought stretchers and blankets from the supply room under the supervision of Supply Sgt. David B. Tepe. This company was instructed to clear the area on Austin Avenue from the City Hall to Eighth Street of all people not taking an active part in the rescue operations. We were directed to continue rescue operations. Our men were armed with M-1 rifles and bayonets. Orders received that no one was to remain on Austin Avenue unless he was a store owner or a manager or helping in the operations. These instructions carried out for the remainder of the night.

Company I—
Company I, with 29 enlisted men, six officers and one Warrant Officer arrived in Waco at 10:00 P.M. Shortly after company arrived, post assignments were made to prevent looting and engage in rescue operations. All men were used throughout the night. Patrols covered the area from Washington to Webster and Fourth to Eighth Streets. Men were assigned to work in pairs on each of these streets as mobile patrols.
Company K—
Approximately 1930 hours all men of this company had reported to the Armory or were accounted for. This Company was assigned to the area on Franklin Street between First and Sixth and was ordered to remove all pedestrians and keep out all vehicles not aiding in rescue work. Our instructions were to prevent looting and to continue to assist in rescue operations. All men of Company K worked throughout the night of May 11th and 12th.

Company L—
At 2310 hours this company arrived at the outskirts of Waco and was escorted to the National Guard Armory. Our area of responsibility was assigned and instructions given to engage in rescue operations and to prevent unauthorized personnel from entering the area, to guard against looting and pilfering. Motorized patrol was formed to patrol from post to post and to check side streets and alleys. Company L was very shorthanded and not relieved until 1100 hours Tuesday morning. All men stayed on their post until that time without relief. Civilian cooperation was good. System control of vehicles and civilian personnel greatly expedited rescue work.

Company M—
Residential section of East Waco badly damaged. This company organized into two patrols, one under Lt. Miller and one under Lt. Matkins. Our job was primarily to assist the victims of the storm and handle traffic. We assisted the injured, prevented looting, and directed traffic throughout the night.

TUESDAY, May 12th, 1953
Regimental Headquarters Company,
143rd Infantry—
Rescue operations continued at a speedy pace. This company area of responsibility remained the same. Several unnecessary sightseers were arrested and transported outside the disaster area. Relief organized into two hours on and two hours off.

3rd Battalion Headquarters Company—
Civilians cooperating 100%. No one allowed to enter buildings within our area. Rescue operations continued.
Company I—
Reliefs organized so men could get some rest. Additional men arrived from Temple making our company strength now 33 enlisted men. New area of responsibility assigned as per written instructions. Hundreds of persons attempting to enter the disaster area were directed away from the area. Local police and highway patrol cooperating in this effort.

Company K—
This company organized into two guard mounts with each alternating four hours on and four hours off. These guards augmented by motorized and roving patrols. Guards were assigned to duty of keeping people away from unsafe walls until rescue teams could destroy them. Elements of a local Naval Reserve Unit, approximately 25 men and officers were assigned to this Company and aided in guarding of this area. A detail from this Company was ordered to the New York Clothier’s Store on Austin Avenue and Gabe’s Pawn Shop, arrest looters and to take into custody all property. Several looters were arrested and relieved of their loot which was placed in our vault at the National Guard Armory.

Company L—
At 1130 hours Company L was relieved for two hours and pulled back to the Armory for sandwiches and coffee and much needed rest. New area of responsibility was assigned. Instructions received that owners of the various business houses were not to be permitted to move any merchandise from the area. Most of the business men seemed to understand the reason for keeping them out of the area. Had they been permitted to come into their stores with trucks and personnel, rescue operations would have been slowed considerably.

Company M—
Operation of this Company continued in East Waco on Elm Street primarily. Our area extended to include First Street from Washington to Mary Street. Traffic control in this area was a great problem. Several of our men were assigned to assist the Highway Patrol and local police in directing traffic and keeping it moved away from this area. Red Cross and Salvation Army furnishing us hot coffee and doughnuts.
Regimental Headquarters Company—
Salvaged materials taken from wrecked buildings were being dumped at First Street and the river and this area was added to our area of responsibility. Eight to ten men were on each relief. One man was placed on each side of Washington Avenue and one on Second and Third Streets between Austin and Washington. Two men were kept at all times at the City dump. The details of this Company were now on duty for two hours and off four hours. Unauthorized persons were kept out of the area. Lt. Pauling recovered a typewriter from a man who was trying to remove it from the area. The man was carried to the police station and the typewriter was brought to the Armory for safe keeping. Orders received that only store owners and managers were now permitted within the area. Identification papers and passes were required. Under no circumstances were any items of property to be removed. Morale in this Company remained very high. Encountered trouble at the City dump late Wednesday night and early Thursday morning. People began to slip by the guards. Immediately additional personnel was rushed to the scene and order was restored.

Third Battalion Headquarters Company—
Guards reported that several of the trucks were being loaded with salvage equipment and merchandise was not being carried to the City dump but was being carried on down the South Third Street road and out of town. Capt. Bates accompanied by two guards followed these trucks and found that they belonged to a resident of Asa, Texas, a small village several miles south of the City of Waco and that this salvaged merchandise was being deposited there. An investigation revealed that this salvaged merchandise was being hidden and Capt. Bates immediately contacted the local District Attorney and proper steps were taken to recover the merchandise.

Company K—
Several persons were caught trying to take merchandise from the buildings and were taken to City Hall. Most of these were legitimate owners but they did not have passes to carry merchandise away from their buildings.

Company L—
Operations continuing in same area of responsibility. Dry uniforms obtained from the Armory at Hillsboro. The morale continued high in spite of the rain. Several unauthorized persons carried out of the area.

Company M—
This Company relieved from duty in East Waco and was assigned a new area including the City square and the Bridge Street area. Nine bodies found in the wreckage of one building. Rains were continuing and hampering rescue operations. It became necessary for us to assign an additional traffic detail to supplement the local police on Waco Drive. Motorized Patrol was maintained in East Waco.

The foregoing extracts describe generally the nature of the operations for the ten day emergency period. Doubtless, there were instances of undetected looting and pilfering but such instances were few. Of special importance is the fact that guardsmen were placed in the position of directing, controlling, and in most instances supervising civilians in the disaster area and though some few minor arguments or misunderstandings arose, there did not occur a single incident of importance or altercation involving a guardsman. Mayor Ralph Wolf and Police Chief Gunterman advised Col. Stem that guardsmen were rigidly enforcing orders received and that notwithstanding a few complaints made by merchants who wanted to commence repair work prior to the time rescue efforts were complete, continued rigid enforcement was necessary. Mayor
Wolf and Chief Gunterman were detained several times by guardsmen until the Chief became properly attired in a recognizable uniform. A typical example of the difficulties which frequently arose, occurred in the I Company Section in the vicinity of 7th and Washington Avenue on Thursday morning, May 14th. One of the I Company guards, Sgt. James H. Bland, halted a local merchant who owned a large department store in the disaster area and demanded to see his pass. The store owner insisted that he did not deem it necessary to have a pass inasmuch as he owned the store and he intended to enter it. The guard stood firm and was refusing to let the merchant into his store when Capt. Pascasio of Company I arrived to take charge of the situation. Capt. Pascasio explained to the merchant that he would have to obtain a pass from the local police at the Highway Patrol office at 29th and Franklin Avenue. Although it was reported that Capt. Pascasio handled the situation diplomatically, the merchant was incensed and made a complaint to the Mayor. The following day, however, the merchant appeared at a meeting at Disaster Headquarters and in the presence of the assembled committee reported that he was at first angered by being refused entrance to his own store but after consideration of the matter, he came to the conclusion that if the National Guardsmen would keep him out of his store without a pass that they would keep everyone out and he complimented the guard highly for rigid enforcement of instructions.

All phases of the operation were planned and coordinated by the Third Battalion staff assisted by Major Jack Armstrong, Regimental S-2, under the direction of Col. Stem. Major Guy Rogers, Battalion S-3, assisted by Lt. Raymond Thornton, planned and prepared detailed guard assignments and instructions. Capt. Aubrey R. Martin, Battalion S-4, assisted by Sgt. Harvey McKinney in charge of transportation, established and maintained a well organized supply system. A kitchen for preparation of food and feeding of troops was located in the Armory Club room where hot meals were served three times daily. It was necessary to use organization vehicles on a twenty-four hour basis for motorized patrol and supply and contracts were entered into with private concerns for the supply of gas and oil. Rubble and broken glass was so thick on the streets and alleys that many tires on vehicles were badly damaged or completely ruined during the first three days of the operation.

According to plan, Company I of Temple and Company L of Hillsboro, Texas were relieved at 1
P.M. on Sunday, May 16th, and those units returned to home station. Instructions from the Adjutant General’s office were that the remainder of the guard units on duty in Waco were to remain until Monday, May 18th. On Monday morning, May 18th, Col. Stem was summoned to Disaster Headquarters and was advised that the Mayor had requested that the National Guard remain on duty until Wednesday, May 20th. Col. Stem agreed to this arrangement provided authority to remain on duty was granted by the Governor. The Committee then contacted Gov. Shivers, who directed the National Guard to remain on duty until Wednesday. In compliance with the request of the disaster committee and acting under the authority of extension granted by the Governor, the Waco units of the National Guard continued in its operations until noon on Wednesday, May 20th.

Block by block and building by building, surveys were made by expert teams organized under the direction of the Waco Chamber of Commerce and it was found that property damage exceeded $57,000,000. 114 people were killed in the tornado and over 350 were injured. Many families were left homeless and in need of food and clothing. In addition to the installations at the National Guard Armory already mentioned, a center was established at the Armory for the distribution of clothing and food. Notwithstanding the confusion and difficulties which arose from time to time, the guard was successful in carrying out its assigned mission. On Tuesday, May 19th, there appeared in the Waco Times Herald under the headline “National Guard Members Heroes” the following article:

“You have to count the Waco, Hillsboro, and Temple National Guard Units among the heroes of the storm which will go down in history as Waco’s greatest disaster of all time. Even before municipal authorities could react to the enormity of the tornado damage, members of the National Guard, many of them employed in the heart of Waco’s business district, started gathering at the National Guard Armory, Sixth Street and Franklin Avenue, in the middle of the stricken area. Telephones were down and transportation snarled. Administrative assistance and some of the regular army personnel assigned here as guard instructors were in the Armory when the tornado struck. Gradually Company commanders and men in the National Guard uniforms started taking post to direct traffic as rescue workers and their equipment started pouring into downtown Waco. Waco units were at the Armory in strength by 7 P.M. Monday. Guardsmen were already working on a voluntary basis when Col. Stem was notified by State Adjutant General K. L. Berry, that the Third Battalion of Headquarters Company of the 143rd Infantry Regiment was on official duty. 32 officers and more than 200 men were on duty almost constantly during the rain soaked Tuesday and Wednesday, most hectic days following the tragedy. Guardsmen walked posts along the sidewalks in every section of wrecked Waco. Some prominent store owners who tried to crash the entry lines without passes will testify the guardsmen were alert. They couldn’t talk their way into their own stores. One merchant, who tried to talk his way in, finally was quoted as saying, “I was plenty peeved, but I decided if they will not let me in, they will not let anyone else in my store.”

CONCLUSIONS

Prior to the date the tornado struck, there was no coordinated plan for disaster operations within the city. Neither the governing body of the city nor civil defense agencies had an over-all plan coordinating the employment of the National Guard, police, Highway Patrol, and other State, County and City law enforcing agencies. The National Guard had a mobilization plan dependent upon the use of commercial telephones and radio but the National Guard had no prearranged plan readily usable in connection with local disaster operations. Previous training received by the Guard in “Domestic Disturbances” did prove valuable and expedited the carrying out of hastily prepared plans.

There was considerable confusion during the first few hours after the tornado struck, due mostly to the fact that the various agencies participating in rescue work had no knowledge of a central coordinating agency. The commander of the Waco National Guard units reported to the Mayor immediately after the tornado struck and advised him of the mission the National Guard could accomplish and the Mayor, acting on this advice, directed the guard to proceed. There was considerable overlapping of duties and poor communications between rescue agencies and those agencies responsible for police duty which affected the guard’s operations initially, however, when disaster headquarters was established at the First National Bank building on Tuesday morning, May 12, measures were taken to coordi-
nate all rescue work, guard duty and pedestrian and traffic control.

Cooperation and coordination between the National Guard, City police, Sheriff’s Department and State Highway Patrol was excellent throughout the entire operation. Civilian cooperation with the National Guard demonstrated that the citizens of Waco had a high regard and respect for the National Guard.

Morale of the guardsmen was excellent during all phases of the operation. Orders and instructions were carried out with maximum efficiency and with due regard for property rights of the citizens of Waco. Mistakes of minor importance occurred from time to time, but it is believed that the mission of the National Guard was satisfactorily accomplished and that the guardsmen received invaluable training.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That each National Guard Unit include in its mobilization plan a means of accomplishing mobilization when commercial telephones and radios are inoperative.

2. That each National Guard Unit formulate a plan for participating in rescue and guard work in nearby areas where disaster may possibly occur and that such disaster plan be reported to civil authorities in the area for use in case of disaster.

3. That a coordinated disaster plan be devised by National Guard units for cooperation with all other law enforcing agencies in the vicinity.

4. That some National Guard vehicles be made readily available within walking distance of the Armory at all times. The National Guard vehicles in units located in Waco are kept 13 miles from Waco and considerable difficulty arose in readily obtaining them.

5. That keys to motor pools, strong rooms, and locker rooms be in possession of additional responsible personnel. It was necessary to break one locker room door to obtain necessary emergency equipment because personnel with keys were not immediately available.

6. Each Armory should have an emergency power plant for use in emergencies. Such a power plant was available to the Waco Armory and was invaluable in the operations of the National Guard.

Compiled by Headquarters 3rd Battalion, 143rd Infantry, 36th Division from the journals of participating units, under the supervision of Major Douglas N. Boyd, Executive Officer.

Left—

Cpl. Martin Bonora

Right—

Pvt. James W. Dickerson

3rd Bn. Med. Plat.,
143rd Inf.
HEADQUARTERS 3D BN
143RD INF.
WACO, TEXAS

GUARD O. #1 11th May, 1953
1. Regt. Hq. Co. will guard the area bounded by Washington on N., River on E., Franklin on S., 4th St. on W., with stationary posts at the western approaches to Washington bridge, Interurban bridge and Suspension bridge.
2. 3rd Bn. Hq. Co. will guard area bounded by Washington on N., 4th on E., Franklin on S., 8th on W.
3. Co. I will guard area bounded by Franklin on N., 4th on E., Webster on S., 8th on W.
5. Co. L will guard area bounded by Mary on N., River on E., Webster on S., 4th on W. Stationary Post on Katy R.R. western approach.
6. Co. M will have Stationary Posts on Eastern approaches to Washington, Interurban, Suspension bridges. Guard with motorized patrols the devastated areas in East Waco, Bells Hill area and Dutton area.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:
1. Guard devastated stores to prevent looting.
2. Arrest all looters and ghouls. Turn them over to City Police.
3. Allow no one to enter or leave any building.
4. Allow no one to take any article into or from any building.
5. Eject all unauthorized personnel from devastated areas.
6. Prevent entry to devastated areas of unauthorized personnel.

Rogers
S-3

HEADQUARTERS 3D BN
143RD INF.
WACO, TEXAS

GUARD O. #2 12th May, 1953
2. Bn. Hq. Co.: Will guard area bounded by Washington on N., 4th on E., Franklin on S., 8th on W.
4. Co. K will guard area bounded by Franklin on N., 1st on E., Jackson on S., 4th on W.
5. Co. L will guard area bounded by Franklin on N., 4th on E., Jackson on S., 8th on W.
6. Co. M will guard area from Washington to Jackson on 1st and all side streets from 1st to River. Patrol East Waco.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:
(Not Additional)
1. Civilian personnel with authorized passes signed by Police Chief Gunterman will be allowed in devastated area.

Rogers
S-3

HEADQUARTERS 3D BN
143RD INF.
WACO, TEXAS

GUARD O. #3 14th May, 1953
1. Regt. Hq. Co. and Co. I will guard Washington from 1st to 8th, all side streets to Austin, Alley between Washington and Austin from 3rd to 8th, City Dump.
2. Bn. Hq. Co. and Co. L will guard Austin from 3rd to 8th, Alley between Austin and Franklin from 3rd to 8th and all side streets to Franklin. Emergency dump 4th and Colcord.
3. Co. K will guard Franklin from 1st to 8th, Alley between Franklin and Mary, 1st to 8th and side streets to Mary.
4. Co. M will guard square and side streets to Franklin, Bridge Street, 1st St. from Washington to Mary, side street from 1st to river, Mary from 1st to 8th, car dump 3rd and Waco Drive W.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:
1. Merchants will be allowed to remove merchandise, clean up business establishments from 0700 15-1900, 15 May.
2. After 1900 merchandise can be removed from devastated area with police permission and escort.

Rogers
S-3

HEADQUARTERS 3D BN
143RD INF.
WACO, TEXAS

GUARD O. #4 17th May, 1953
1. Regt. Hq. Co. will patrol with motors, Washington from River to 8th, Alley between Washington and Austin, 3rd to 8th, Side streets down to Austin, City dump and Emergency dump 4th and Colcord (Stationary Post during daylight hours).
2. Bn. Hq. Co. will patrol with motors Austin 3rd to 8th, Alley between Austin and Franklin to 8th, Side streets down to Franklin. Take over city and emergency dumps at 0530-1900.
3. Co. K will patrol with motors Franklin 1st to 8th, Alley between Franklin and Mary 1st to 8th, Side streets down to Mary.
4. Co. M will patrol with motors Square 1st from Washington to Mary, Mary 1st to 8th, Car dump 3rd and Waco Drive W. (Stationary post)

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:
Same Instructions as Previous Guard Orders.

Rogers
S-3
TRAFFIC DETAIL
(Sun., Mon., Tues., 17, 18, 19 May, 1953)
TO: REGTL. HQ. CO., CO. K., CO. M.
2. Uniform cotton Khakis, helmet liner, rifle, pistol belt, combat boots.
3. Relief will be by Co.
4. Detail reported Lt. Francis, Traffic Division, City Police, who assigned them following traffic control posts:
   1. 5th and Clay
   2. 5th and Jackson
   3. 9th and Austin
   4. 8th and Washington
   5. 5th and Columbus
Co. K.
1. 1st and Washington
2. 2nd and Washington
3. 3rd and Washington
4. 4th and Washington
5. 5th and Washington
6. 6th and Washington
Co. M.
1. 1st and Bridge
2. 2nd and Bridge
3. 2nd and Franklin
4. 3rd and Franklin
5. 4th and Franklin
6. 6th and Franklin

17th May, 1953

CHANGE NO. 1 TO GUARD O. NO. 4
1. Washington open 8th to River.
2. Balance of area open to 5th.
   * * * *
   This order remained with very little change until 0700, 20 May, 1953, when all units were relieved mission completed.

Rogers
S-3

18th May, 1953
Lieutenant Colonel Wiley W. Stem
Commanding Officer
Third Battalion, 143rd Infantry
Waco, Texas

Dear Colonel Stem:

I wish to extend to you, the officers and men of the Third Battalion, 143rd Infantry, Headquarters Company, 143rd Infantry, and the 220th AAA Detachment (RCAT), my sincere gratitude for the outstanding job the members of the mentioned units of the Texas National Guard did during the disaster relief work caused by the Waco Tornado 11 May 1953.

Without formal notice, the majority of the officers and men of your units reported to the armories within two hours and upon the request of the mayor, began the difficult task or organizing the area for rescue work and restoring order. Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Third Battalion, Regimental Headquarters Company, Companies K and M, 143rd Infantry, all Waco units, were committed to their assigned task within three hours after the tornado had struck. Company I of Temple and Company L of Hillsboro were assembled at their armories and upon your order proceeded to Waco arriving by 10:30 P. M.

During the period 11 May 1953 to 20 May 1953, you and the units exhibited high standards of military proficiency in carrying out your assigned mission of initial organization, patrolling, and guard duty within the disaster area, thereby rendering immeasurable service to the stricken city. Your accomplishments in maintaining order and the tireless efforts of all personnel reflect great credit upon your organizations and the entire Texas National Guard and State of Texas. I wish to commend you, your officers and men for this outstanding service.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Allan Shivers
Governor

1 June 1953
Lieutenant Colonel Wiley W. Stem, Jr
Commanding Officer
Third Battalion, 143rd Infantry
36th Infantry Division
Texas National Guard
Waco, Texas

Dear Sir:

May I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the members of the Texas National Guard who were on duty here in Waco during the tornado disaster period. The members of the National Guard were on duty long hours under terrible conditions protecting the lives and property of the citizens of the City of Waco.

It will be impossible for me to contact each member of the National Guard and thank them for their wonderful work and I am taking this means to express the appreciation of Waco for the fine work of these young men.

Very truly yours,

Ralph R. Wolf
Mayor
City of Waco, Texas
APPENDIX NO. 2

Roster of

HQ. CO., 143RD INF.  
WACO, TEXAS

Maj. Jack L. Armstrong  
Capt. Roger Cannon  
1st Lt. Billy E. Pauling  
2nd Lt. Cedric D. K. Copeland  
2nd Lt. Earl T. Crump  
WO J.G. Dock A. Everett  
M/Sgt. Roland R. Fryer  
M/Sgt. Monroe L. Kelinske  
M/Sgt. Everett L. Sledge  
SFC Arthur H. Grusendorf, Jr.  
SFC Jimmie A. Jay  
SFC Arthur C. Langlotz, Jr.  
SFC Robert D. Wolf  
Sgt. Julian B. Aronson  
Sgt. Lawrence A. Ducas  
Sgt. Martin S. Finstad  
Sgt. Edward L. Grones  
Sgt. Joe J. Halamik  
Sgt. Harry C. Henderson  
Sgt. Henry A. Kluck  
Sgt. Robert C. Lazenby  
Sgt. Earl R. Lier  
Sgt. Allec Maldonado  
Sgt. Edward G. Sparkman  
Sgt. George H. Straten, Jr.  
Sgt. George W. Wallace  
Cpl. Lavaun DeMonney  
Cpl. Joe F. Dulock  
Cpl. Lonnie V. Griffith  
Cpl. Jerry L. Kendrick  
Cpl. Talbert Landfried  
Cpl. Alton H. Lippe  
Cpl. Antonio Mejia  
Cpl. Joseph A. Myers  
Cpl. William M. Nors  
Cpl. Billy J. Pierce  
Cpl. Tommy R. Podsednik  
Cpl. James B. Slavens  
Cpl. Urban A. Straten  
Cpl. Harvey L. Woodard  
PFC Kenneth Cotham  
PFC Bobby J. Finstad  
PFC Michael M. Glatter, Jr.  
PFC Renard A. Kociak  
PFC Jack J. Maddy  
Pvt. 2 James E. Carpenter  
Pvt. 2 Carroll J. Francis  
Pvt. 2 Jimmy L. Reson  
Pvt. 2 Benjamin F. Stephens  
Pvt. 2 Roy S. Whittington  
Pvt. 1 David H. Barlow  
Pvt. 1 Richard T. Henry  
Pvt. 1 Clarence F. Jander  
Pvt. 1 William B. Johnston  
Pvt. 1 Willburn E. Kent  
Pvt. 1 Zachary C. McGee  
Pvt. 1 Raymond K. Ramsey  
Pvt. 1 Charles F. Moore  
Pvt. 1 Mike R. Palacio  

In addition to the above the following men from out of town units reported for duty: 
M/Sgt. Vernon D. Snyder  
Cpl. Lafayette Boyd  
Cpl. Edward M. Ellis  
SFC Joe Stephens  
Cpl. Thomas C. Glass  
SFC Willie T. Halavenha  
SFC Robert N. Reeves  
Cpl. Weldon C. Butler  
Cpl. Frank Ripper  
PFC John R. Hunter  
PFC Ralph J. Reynolds  
PFC James C. Thomason

THIRD BATTALION 
HEADQUARTERS COMPANY  
Lt. Col. Wiley W. Stem, Jr.  
Major Douglas N. Boyd  
Major Guy L. Rogers  
Capt. Herbert E. Gunn  
Capt. Aubrey R. Martin  
1st Lt. Thomas R. Thornton  
2nd Lt. Oliver B. McMahon, Jr.  
2nd Lt. Darwin W. Miller  
CWO 2 John A. Pinto  
M/Sgt. Joe B. Mullins, Jr.  
M/Sgt. Thomas B. Pack  
M/Sgt. Rudy J. Pool  
M/Sgt. David Quay  
M/Sgt. Joyce L. Taylor  
SFC Charles A. Dean  
SFC Harvey J. McKinney  
SFC Robert P. Orr  
SFC Fred L. Swamer  
SFC Aubrey L. Warren, Jr.  
Sgt. Billy R. Aldridge  
Sgt. Bobby E. Barnard  
Sgt. Tom S. Carlisle  
Sgt. John W. Collins  
Sgt. Wesley E. Felkner  
Sgt. Donald E. Melasky  
Sgt. David B. Tepe  
Sgt. Billy D. Thompson  
Pfc. Dan E. Davis  
Pfc. Henry P. Dunn  
Pfc. Bobby N. Harrington  
Pfc. James E. Orr  
Pfc. Kennedy R. Orr  
Pfc. Douglas A. Porter  
Pfc. Elias M. Pajardo  
Pfc. David W. Webster  
Pvt. 1 Curtis B. Aldridge  
Pvt. 1 Robert G. Breckenridge  
Pvt. 1 John L. Buckner  
Pvt. 1 Albert B. Denney  
Pvt. 1 Billy C. Hardy  
Pvt. 1 Donald B. McCune  
Pvt. 1 Jerry P. Norman  
Pvt. 1 Wayne E. Purvis  
Pvt. 1 Francisco Sustaita, Jr.  
Pvt. 1 Linwood R. Trowell

3RD BN. MEDICAL PLATOON  
143RD INFANTRY  
2nd Lt. Fred Morrison  
Sgt. Lloyd T. Daily  
Sgt. George W. Mitchell  
Sgt. Guy H. Winsted  
Cpl. Martin M. Bonora  
Cpl. Billy F. Erskine  
Pvt. 2 Claude K. Butler  
Pvt. 2 Weldon O. Daily  
Pvt. 2 William A. Turner  
Pvt. 1 James W. Dickerson  
Pvt. 1 Gordon L. Bounds

220TH AAA DET. (RCAT)  
1st Lt. Lawrence G. Boyd  
M/Sgt. Marion E. Mitchell  
SFC Moses Gutierrez  
Sgt. Irvin R. Buchanan, Jr.  
Cpl. Joe T. Hawkins  
Cpl. George M. Wallace  
PFC Robert L. Waller  
Pvt. 2 John D. O'Bryant  
Pvt. 1 John J. Parker  
Pvt. 1 Harry R. Brown

COMPANY I  
143RD INFANTRY  
Capt. Edgar R. Pascasio  
Lt. Thomas E. Eubank  
Lt. J. W. Hutchinson  
Lt. Arthur J. Mercer, Jr.  
Lt. Sam H. Cate  
Lt. Thomas M. Newton  
WO Elmer E. Clarke  
M/Sgt. Wayne A. Beasley  
M/Sgt. Joe R. Champ  
M/Sgt. Billie B. Stewart  
SFC Orvil L. Harper, Jr.  
SFC John R. Cantrell  
SFC Frank Koctar  
Sgt. William E. Brodie  
Sgt. James H. Bland  
Sgt. William G. Morgan, Jr.  
Sgt. Jack M. Morris  
Sgt. Robert M. Peavey  
Sgt. Ernest L. Shumake  
Sgt. T. J. Threadgill  
PFC Wayne L. Despain  
PFC Jack T. Gibson  
PFC Robert J. Gilmore  
PFC William L. Hargrove  
PFC Ray E. Hinsley
Participating Units

Cpl. Jack W. Jones
Cpl. John C. Raper
Cpl. Bobby R. Roper
Cpl. Willie C. Terrell
PFC Donald M. Berry
PFC Joe B. Cox, Jr.
PFC Floyd H. McCall
PFC J. C. Walker
PFC Glenn C. Webster
Pvt-1 Ronald L. Dean
Pvt-1 John Prince
Pvt-1 Leroy E. Sebesta
Pvt-1 Roy E. Pryor
Pvt-1 Olin L. Brummett
Pvt-1 James E. Proctor
Pvt-1 Norman T. Hluchan

COMPANY K
143RD INFANTRY
Capt. James D. Spurgeon
1Lt. Elmer E. Hyden
2nd Lt. James W. Hendrix
2nd Lt. Gene D. Johnson
JWO Sam A. Brooks
M/Sgt. Hugh D. Fincher
M/Sgt. Billy R. McCormick
M/Sgt. Joseph L. Oswald, Jr.
M/Sgt. Alva B. Stem
SFC Marvin D. Custer
SFC Edwin C. Fraser
SFC Fred Khoury
SFC Don R. Long
SFC Howard N. Pedigo
SFC Anthony O. Rachui
Sgt. Bobby E. Abel
Sgt. Carl A. Adamick
Sgt. Robert A. Brister
Sgt. Otis E. Johnson
Sgt. Wesley J. Turner
Cpl. Lester G. Adams
Cpl. Walter A. Baker
Cpl. Bobby N. Ballard
Cpl. Gene A. Davis
Cpl. Raymond Lopez
Cpl. Donald W. Pack
Cpl. Edward T. Rachui
Cpl. Thomas J. Reinert
Cpl. George B. Senior
PFC Robert C. Ford
PFC William D. Loftin
PFC Bobby J. McNairy
PFC Carl F. Remington, Jr.
PFC Paul J. Swanson, Jr.
Pvt-2 Eleno G. Aguilar
Pvt-2 Walter W. Bell
Pvt-2 Santos M. Pena, Jr.
Pvt-1 Thomas S. Brown
Pvt-1 Billy L. Cooley
Pvt-1 Pedro H. Garcia

COMPANY L
143RD INFANTRY
Capt. Thomas W. Head
1st Lt. Melvin M. Boots
2nd Lt. Cecil H. Stubblefield
2nd Lt. Barney J. Taylor
WO Luther N. Christian
M/Sgt. Royal D. Gage
M/Sgt. Elmer R. Murphy
M/Sgt. Bobby L. Patterson
SFC Delton W. Degner
SFC Horace W. Head
SFC Jasper B. Reagan
SFC Olin D. Reed
Sgt. Alvin R. Arnold
Sgt. Bobby D. Jones
Sgt. James E. Martin
Sgt. Timothy W. Mitchell
Sgt. Sammie G. Mosley
Sgt. John F. Robertson, Jr.
Sgt. Johnny R. Slovak
Cpl. Harold R. Chapman
Cpl. George A. Graig
Cpl. James E. Graig
Cpl. Victor Pavlus, Jr.
PFC Darryl L. Fawcett
PFC Bennie D. Gee
PFC Windell W. Gillaspie
PFC Donnie L. Morris
PFC Earnest J. Prier
Pvt-2 Joe R. Brooks
Pvt-2 Thomas G. Gabbert
Pvt-2 Terry R. Hauck
Pvt-2 Joe E. Nabors
Pvt-2 Rex L. Roberson
Pvt-2 Douglas E. Porter
Pvt-2 Edward Wells
Pvt-1 Tony G. Honeycutt
Pvt-1 Johnnie M. Land
Pvt-1 Curtis D. Pollard
Pvt-1 Bobby R. Porter
Pvt-1 Robert H. Roberts, Jr.
Pvt-1 James M. Sanders
Pvt-1 Travis K. Sevier
Pvt-1 James D. Smith
Pvt-1 Bobby Wheatley
Pvt-1 Billy C. Moffett

COMPANY M
143RD INFANTRY
Capt. Hubert A. Simons
2nd Lt. Robert Matkin
2nd Lt. Donald R. Miller
WO Archie H. McDugal

M/Sgt. Edward L. Barnett
M/Sgt. Carroll C. Harper
M/Sgt. Solon J. Saffle
SFC William M. Bryant
SFC Ralph D. Castillo
SFC Tommy G. Copeland
SFC Nick Kazanas
SFC Fred T. Post
SFC Stanley N. Williams
SFC William H. Williams
Sgt. Jimmy W. Davis
Sgt. Raymond L. Federwisch
Sgt. James N. Franklin
Sgt. William E. Kaufus
Sgt. Nick Klaras
Sgt. Bobby J. Lewallen
Sgt. Charles L. Ludke
Sgt. Clarence J. McCaulley
Sgt. Mark F. McMillan
Sgt. Purdy L. Medlin
Sgt. Homer Pace
Cpl. Wayne Antoine
Cpl. Clarence D. Baisden
Cpl. Charles M. Barret
Cpl. Francis M. Davidson
Cpl. Wyndell M. Ferrall
Cpl. Edsel E. January
Cpl. Claude A. Kincannon
Cpl. William H. Lucky
Cpl. George Maldonado
Cpl. Warren L. Mason
Cpl. Donald K. Polk
Cpl. John D. Rowton
Cpl. Cecil G. Shaw
Cpl. James R. Smith
Cpl. James E. Spry
Cpl. Robert V. Vickers
Cpl. Henry W. Wright
PFC Clyde O. Barfield
PFC Windol L. Helleson
PFC Derel L. Medlin
Pvt-1 Marvin E. Anthony
Pvt-1 Roger E. Barrett
Pvt-1 Bobby J. Brown
Pvt-1 Hearald O. Cathey
Pvt-1 Dwayne D. Donaldson
Pvt-1 Glen M. Hall
Pvt-1 Jerry D. Harrow
Pvt-1 Bobby L. McClure
Pvt-1 Bobby J. Pace
Pvt-1 Pete Palasota
Pvt-1 Bobby C. Rawls
Pvt-1 Robert E. Snider
Pvt-1 David L. Snipes
Pvt-1 Kenneth W. Voss
Pvt-1 David J. Urban
Pvt-1 Jackie D. Wolf
Pvt-1 Billy R. Brown
Pvt-1 William A. Taylor