

Guides met us outside Manchester and guided the companies to our first site a couple of miles to the east of Lebanon, Tennessee. There wasn't much interest in the new location at first because we were all too tired to think of anything except getting set up and getting a little rest. After the camp was all set up and everybody had his tent erected, we had chow, then everybody hit the hay.

Early the next morning I went to work in one of the three stone quarries which the battalion operated. Those of us who didn't work in the quarries were sent out to work on roads. During the whole time we were in Tennessee our work was mainly made up of operating quarries, road repair, some culverts, a little bridge work, and mud.

Recreation was pretty much cut and dried for us. I went into Lebanon about three nighth a week with some of the men, usually to see a movie and have a meal at a cafe. Dances were held at a roadhouse near our camp and there cokes were sold, — along with hamburgers.

Probably the best and most successful party the battalion had was put on for us at the YMCA in Nashville. It began with swimming in the evening and was followed by a dance. Food was laid out on tables extending the width of the dance floor and GI's and their partners could stop by and eat practically any variety of food they cared for.

One job we had that was different from most of our work in Tennessee was the loading of all engineer equipment in the maneuver area on to sixty gondolas and flatcars. That was quite a job and we used just about all of the saws, drills, and nail drivers from the battalion's compressor to do the work.

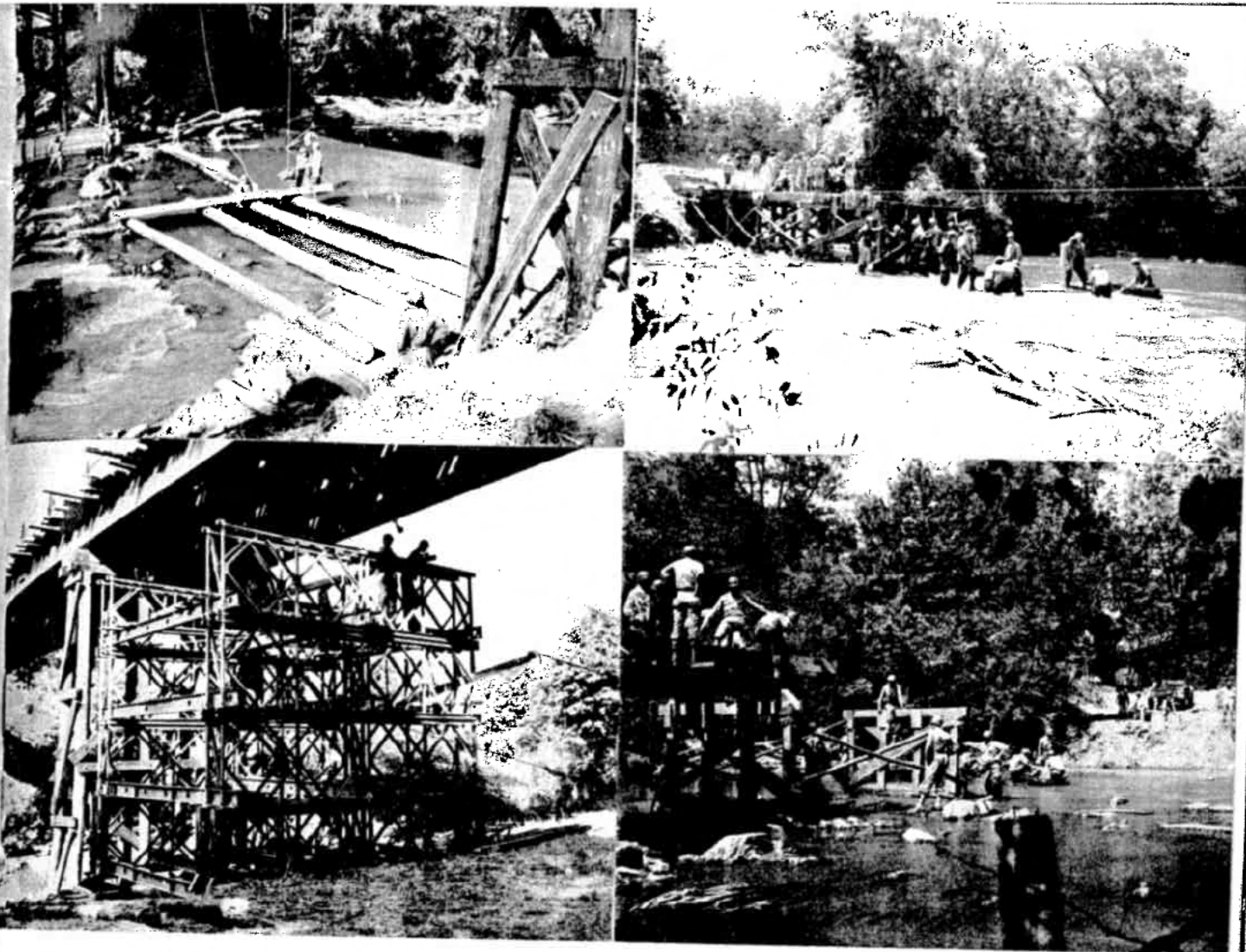
About moving back to Camp Gordon there isn't much to tell. We loaded up and took the convoy back the same way we came down and maneuvers were over. Oh yes — — there is one thing about our trip back to Gordon that I guess none of us will ever forget. Remember? "Helmet liners will be worn with chin straps down."



During the days following, special emphasis was put on garrison soldiering. Drill, military courtesy, and basic engineer subjects again were practiced.

During this time a Basic Medical Test was taken, bunkers were built for a 10th Armored Division problem, short morning marches were taken, and review training in mines, gas, and first aid were given. MOS tests were conducted — — the air — — ground test taken — — Colonel Hull went to mine school — — anti-aircraft gunners went to school at Camp Stewart — — bazooka firing — — gas chamber — — Nazi village fighting course.

The most outstanding single piece of work or training that took place during this period was the replacing of caps on a 720' bridge that had a 36" I beam for support. The bridge crossed the Little River near Appling, Georgia and was 40 feet above the water. Company "B" was given this bridge job. A Bailey bridge pier bent was built from the ground for use in jacking the bridge from its permanent bents. While the permanent bridge was under repair, Company "C" built a by pass and a 140 foot timber trestle bridge to handle traffic. Company "A" built a bypass on the opposite side of the bridge, putting in a footbridge and an M2 treadway bridge.



Little River Bridge Job

CAROLINA

August 6th was the beginning of Carolina maneuvers for the 256th. The immediate higher headquarters was the 1148th Engineer Combat Group, who sent down a request for a barrier plan to be submitted by 1800 the next day after moving into bivouac. After the plan had been submitted and approved, it was put into effect by the battalion. This was the beginning of hectic and very busy maneuver training for the 256th Engineers.

DEMOLITIONS

were placed on the bridges in the barrier plan. Dummy TNT blocks had to be cut for two days. Roads, bridges, and fields were mined and breached according to carefully prepared plans drawn up during each night. All this time the battalion was continually on the move, setting up, and moving again. On August 17 the first phase of the maneuvers was over.

The second phase was under the 1147th Engineer Combat Group. "A" and "B" Companies were given the first job in this phase: that of building a rough timber bridge across the Broad River. Next came the job of building an infantry support raft and operating a ferry across the same river.

After this came road building and culverts. In this particular case demolitions were an important factor. The 19th of August saw the close of the second and last phase. With the maneuvers with a critique held at the 1147th Engineer Combat Group CP.

Chiggers — no sleep. — mines — water — melons. This was the story in Carolina. During the first week one company spent two nights and a day operating two ferrying systems continuously. Due to shallow water, outboard motors were useless so both ferrying rafts had to be operated by hand which added to the tediousness and monotony. The job of ferrying two battalions across was finally completed before any sleep was to be had.

Another company built a timber trestle bridge with materials obtainable on the site. The bridge was a bypass for a simulated blown bridge.

Mines and more mines were the order of the day in the second week — mine belts many miles long were laid with dummy mines and sketched complete. Also mines were laid in roads both in day and at night. Mine detectors were operated on roads and mines discovered were pulled by the rope method.

All bridges and culverts were figured for demolition and dummy charges were placed.

Hardly a watermelon patch went unscathed during this Carolina battle. If the melons couldn't be purchased from the front of the house — they were raided from the rear areas. These ripe melons quenched many a thirst for tired GI's during the hot August days.

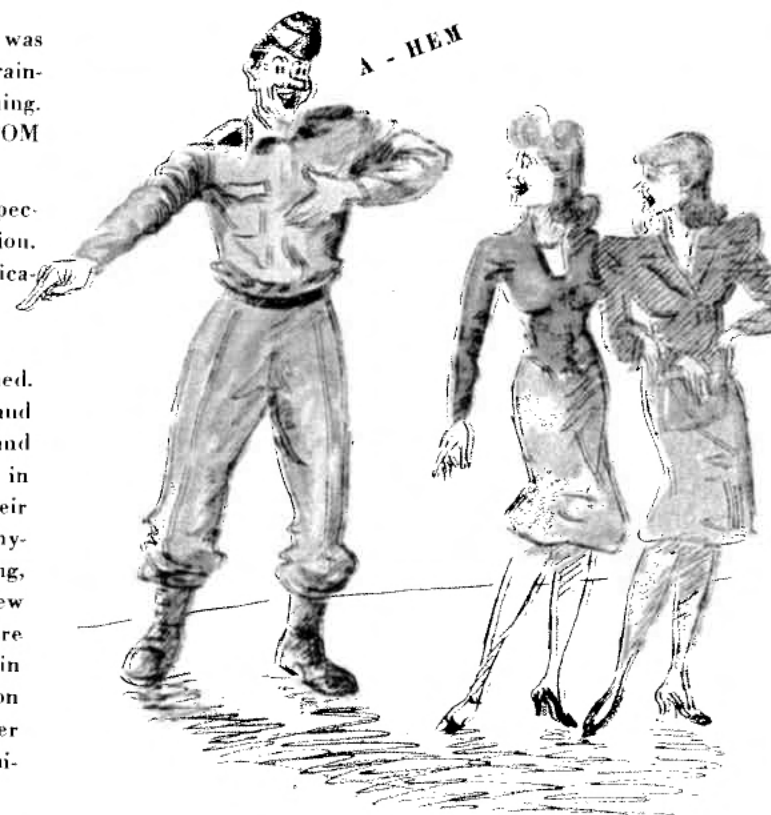
When the two weeks were over, everyone went back to Camp Gordon nursing many digger bites: nevertheless, valuable training had been accomplished and living in the open under battle conditions was excellent experience.



POM (Preparation For Overseas Movement) was a complete review of all subjects from basic training through specialist courses and unit training. It resembled preparations for a final exam. POM was just that.

August 27th arrived along with the Inspector-General. He inspected the entire battalion, questioning officers and men. — After qualification, the battalion had seven day furloughs, which speak for themselves.

Immediately after furloughs, the pace quickened. All equipment was processed, packed and crated. — — — Vehicles were checked and turned in. — Personnel not required either in processing or packing and crating cleaned their equipment, both personal and sectional. A physical program was going full blast with swimming, mass games, marches, and calisthenics. New clothing and equipment were drawn, rifles were turned in to Ordnance for bluing, certain officers were trained at the Augusta Arsenal on weapons the battalion hadn't been issued. Water section personnel worked in the Augusta Municipal Water Works to gain experience.



CAMP KILMER



Tension increased with restriction of the battalion on October 21st. On October 23rd the battalion moved out of Camp Gordon by troop train on their way to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey. At Kilmer, physical examinations were the chief concern of the men along with the stepped up program of processing during the short time there. Among other things, rifles had to be checked, clothing gone over, and shots were given. Lifeboat and ship evacuation training was given.

An early morning ride by train brought the battalion to the New York Port of Embarkation. Our particular ship was the SS Uruguay. At the pier the men lined up their respective numbers ate doughnuts, drank a hot cup of coffee, and as their turn came, each shouted his name to the troop checker and boarded the ship.

PART IV
E N G L A N D

The trip across the Atlantic was of thirteen days duration. The ship wasn't as crowded as expected; however, room was anything but plentiful.

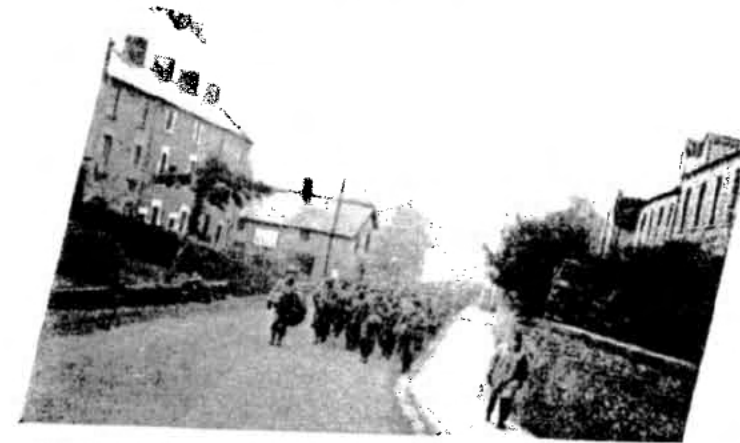
Activity on the voyage consisted mainly of sleeping, reading, boat drill, and "crap" games.

Food for the enlisted men was considered adequate by the ship's administrative personnel, however, there were some men who felt that they did not have enough to eat and proceeded to satisfy their hunger with coca cola and candy — — by the crate and carton. Others assumed a slightly greenish color in the face at the mere mention of the words potatoes or gravy.

The night before disembarking there was a rush and jumble of GI's cleaning the boat. The SS Uruguay put in at Queen's Landing, Liverpool, England. At 0400 hours the next morning the battalion left the ship to ride a cold, crowded English troop train to Frome, England — — the battalion's first and last camp. in the United Kingdom.



GROUNDS OF ESTATE



MARCH THROUGH
FROME TO TRAIN



HEADED
FOR FROME

MANOR
HOUSE

It didn't take long for the newness of the countryside to wear off for the men of the battalion. The rolling, damp, rockfaced terrain caused only a few comments. Most thoughts were harboring around home and only a few questions were asked of one another about the future camp's prospects. Boarding quartermaster trucks at Frome, we arrived, after a short drive, at Marston Bigot. (Marston Bigot was a private estate formerly owned by the Earl of Cork and now used by the American Army through lend lease.) Headquarters was set up in the Manor house and the line companies quartered in various Nissen huts and small brick barracks located about the estate.

After the battalion became situated, the collecting of TAT equipment was given to priority, however, the necessity of getting the men into shape after the voyage was not overlooked. Every morning, A, B, and C companies and even portions of H/S company were formed for calisthenics wherever there was space on the estate. The battalion operated its own, P.X., which was staffed by enlisted men of the various companies. Articles needed by all the men could be purchased here with the exception of scarce items such as watches, lighters, and fountain pens. The P.X. sold no beer or cokes, but these could be obtained in Frome — beer at the local pubs, and coca cola at the Red Cross "Doughnut Dugout".

Frequent passes were given to visit a number of towns. The London pass was for three days and was greatly welcomed by the men, however, most of their evenings were spent in Frome, which was only two miles from camp. The movie theater there advertised choice seats in the balcony for which an extra price was paid. Smoking was permitted in this balcony, probably accounting for the 3 shillings 6 pence seats. The movie was often times plainly visible through the haze of smoke. "FISH AND CHIPS" cafes were dotted about town. This widely, celebrated food of England was served with large, dried up green peas, and diluted ersatz orange juice to drink.

There were dances in various towns circling Marston Bigot. The Nuney church dances were particularly successful along with hobnobs in Frome and Bath.



As for training, schools were conducted in weapons, mines, and map and compass reading. More practical experience was gained in the laying, locating, and picking up of mine fields and tactical infantry problems were held for the line companies.

On December 6th, the battalion was called upon to perform the special mission of constructing two camps for an airborne operation. — — one camp to be located at Fairford and the other at Oakley, near Oxford University. Speed and secrecy were emphasized and the job was to be completed by December 10th. B and C companies, and part of A company, moved out on the 7th of December. Requests for supplies for this job were given top priority at the depots.

The companies went to work and when they were finished the result was two complete camps with 344 pyramidal tents, ten large ward tents, four wall tents, nineteen latrine screens and many tentflies. They also installed fifty-seven type B field ranges, fifteen type A field ranges, eighty-two immersion heaters, eighteen extra fire units, 2285 cots, straw filled mattress for each cot, 114 GI cans were placed and seventy-one Coleman lanterns distributed. More than 1000 feet of matting in three layers was installed at one camp for vehicle and pedestrian traffic and a great network of concertina fences was placed about the camps.

"A" company also had a special mission of constructing a turnaround on the airstrip of one of the evacuation hospitals nearby.

On December 23, the battalion received orders to be able to move to the port of embarkation on six hours notice. All passes were cancelled immediately, and the unit went to work crating all equipment. From 1830 that same night until 0600 the following morning, the men worked on crating.

On the morning of the 24th of December the battalion marched to Frouce and entrained for Southampton. After reaching the city, the men made another march to waiting LCI's for the trip across the channel to France.

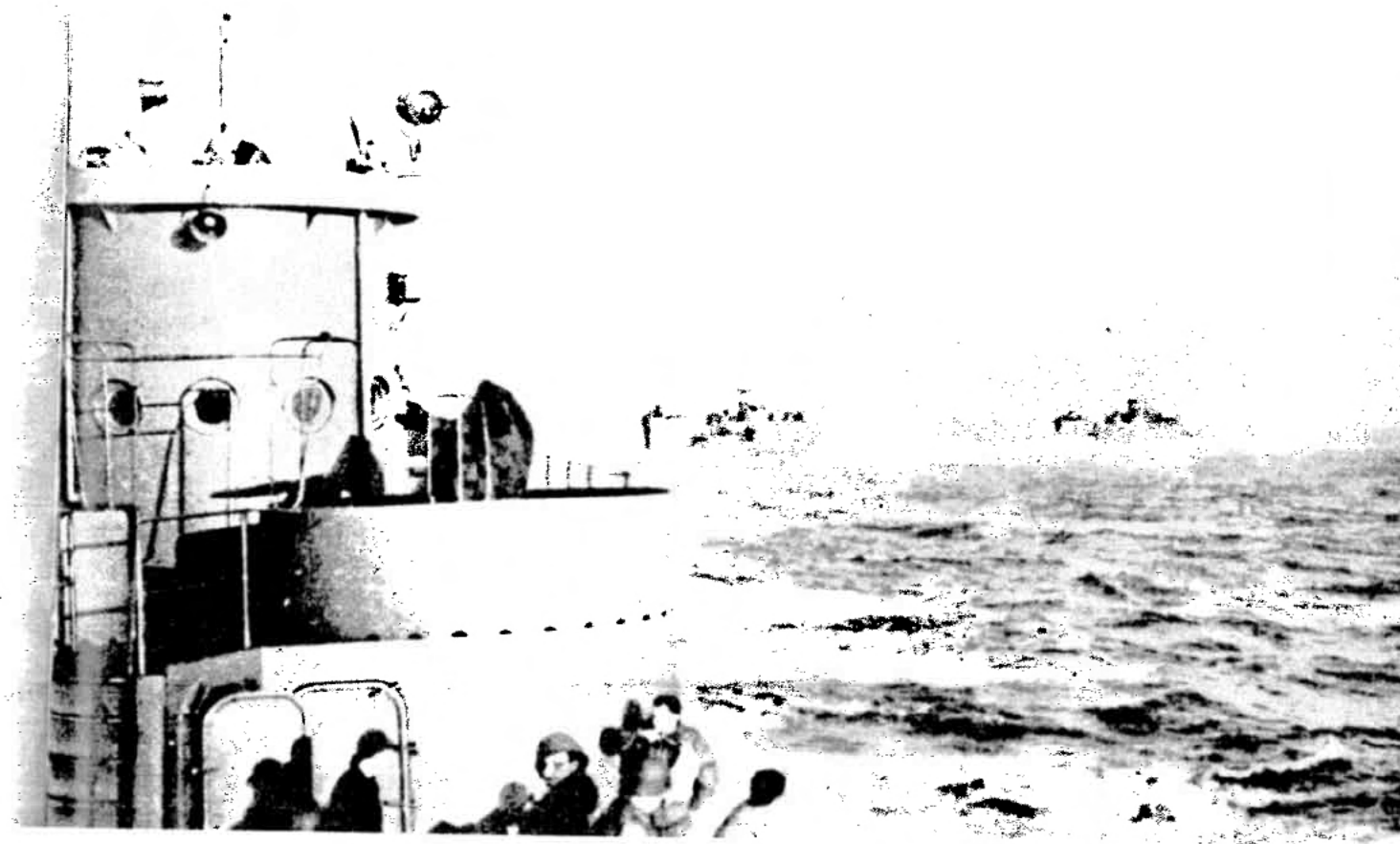
The date was December 24th — — Christmas eve.

LCI-a seaworthy mass of metal meaning Landing Craft, Infantry. There were three ships crowded with the strength of the 256th.

For Christmas dinner there was an assorted mixture of ready prepared food manufactured by concerns in America, called "C" rations.

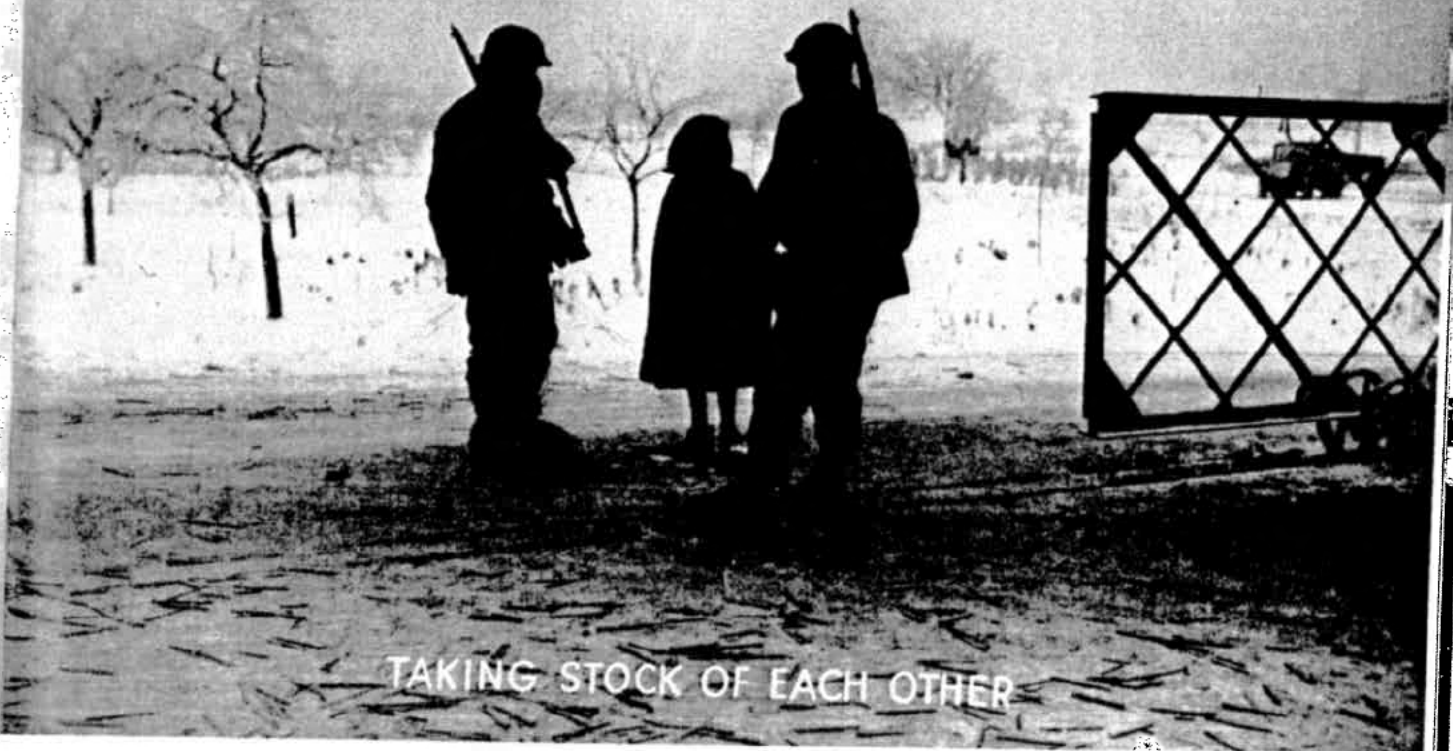
The rolling, pitching ships caused many men to become sick. There was quiet in the sleeping quarters for a while on the channel — — all of a sudden a clatter of feet began, running for the steps going up to the latrine. This constant traffic had the highest priority aboard ship.

The two LCI's arrived in Cherbourg harbor after dark. The night of December 25th, the battalion was loaded into large trucks and taken out through the city into the country, headed for their first camp site in France. Like thousands of American soldiers before them, every man was either consciously or unawaredly repeating over and over in his mind — — "So this is Europe — — and we are closer to the real thing than we've ever been before."



PART V
FRANCE

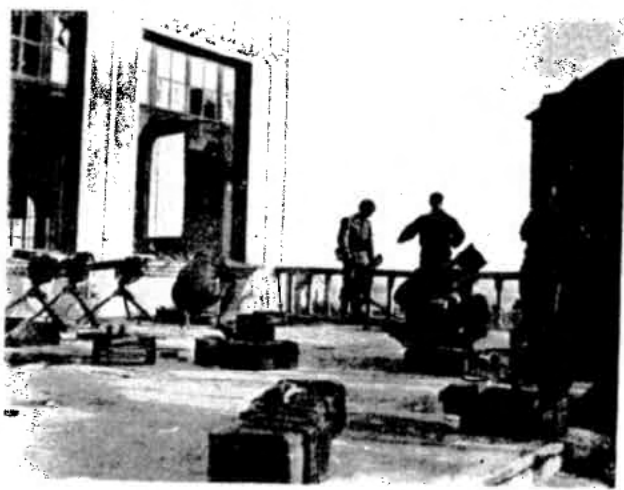
FRANCE



TAKING STOCK OF EACH OTHER



WELCOME BUDDY



CLEANING AND MOUNTING
MACHINE GUNS



SOME MEN SLEPT OUTSIDE

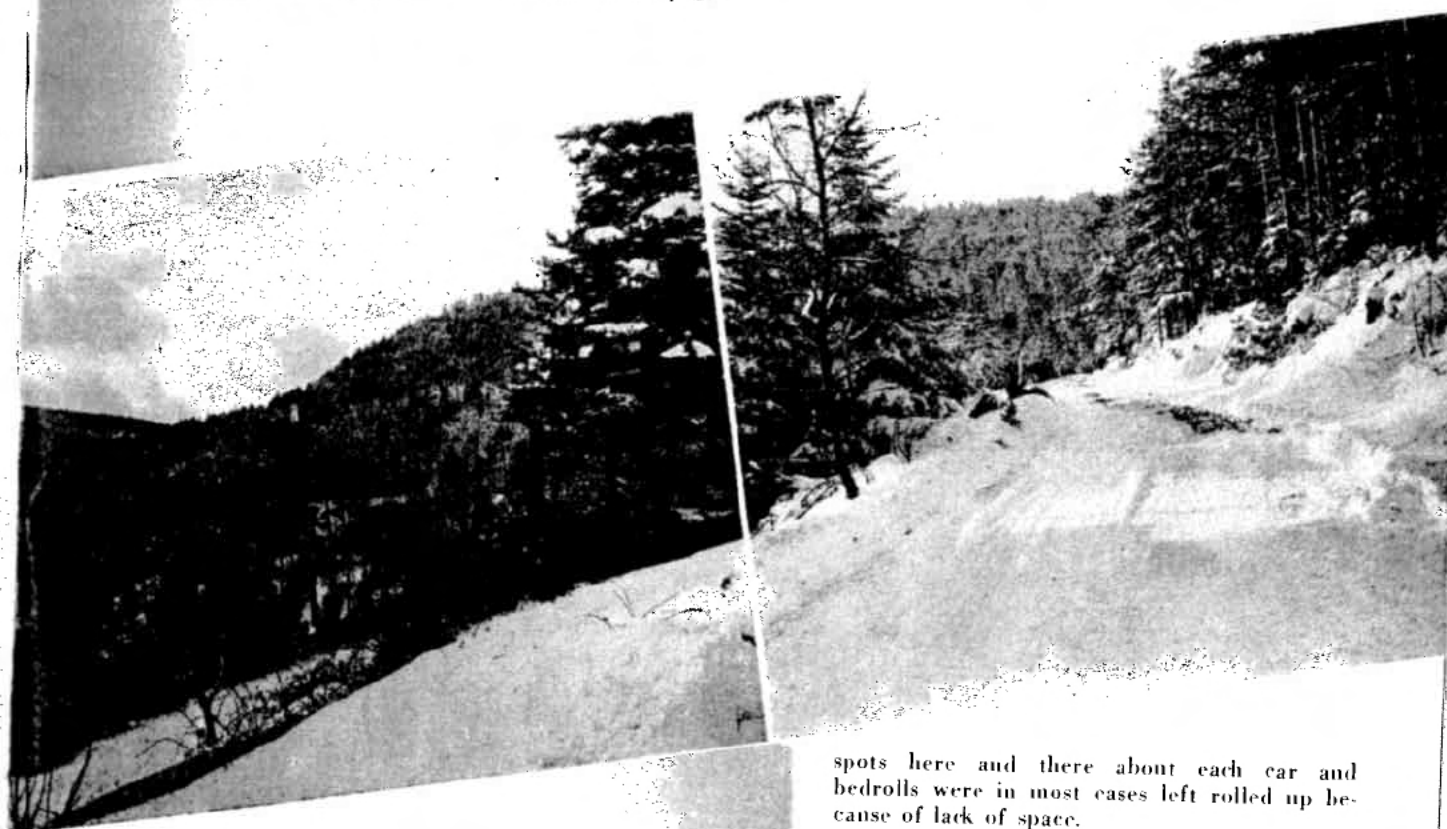
As the QM trucks rolled into the outskirts of Cherbourg, the men saw, for the first time on the Continent the fruit of war. Even in the narrow path of light afforded by the trucks' headlamps, it was easy to discern scarred buildings, mile after mile of twisted, shattered concrete telephone poles and the complete confusion of broken wire and power lines that seemingly hung from every tree and post. This impression was further heightened by a biting, chill wind which forced the men to cover themselves with blankets in order to keep warm. In every respect the first few hours in France lived up to the mental picture that each man had of the days to come.

It was at one o'clock in the morning of December 26th when the trucks finally stopped in front of the building that was to be the first camp site — Hotel Bellevue at Barneville. The moonlight was so bright that the men could easily see the large, stone hotel, and even the water of the English Channel below.

After being assigned to their quarters, the men wasted no time in settling down; however, there were actually very few men who slept during the night. Due to the cold wind from the ocean that played through the building, the chill cement floors and the combination of hunger and general excitement over being on the Continent, sleep was almost impossible.

While at Barneville, the battalion was mobile reserve for coastal defenses in conjunction with the 156th Infantry Regiment. After a three day stay, the unit was alerted and on the 29th of December moved out to what was to become second nature before the war was over — continuous, sudden changing of bivouac.

Vosges Mountains



Our next stop was at Coutances, France. To most of the men this town looked as though it had "seen action", but before too long they were to see villages that had not only seen, but had become the victim of action.

Orders arrived for the battalion to move by motor and rail to Lunneville, France, some 400 miles from Coutances; consequently, preparations were made in advance for the use of "40 and 8's" and for the organic vehicles the battalion was to travel in.

In compliance with orders, the battalion was divided into two groups — those going by train and those going by truck. Early in the morning those men who were to travel by "40 and 8's" walked the seemingly endless two miles to the railway site. It was one of those cloudy, gray January mornings which one associates with most of the moves the unit made. Upon arrival at the railway the men were assigned to various box cars and the process of making some sort of a home out of the cars began. Personal equipment was placed in particular

spots here and there about each car and bedrolls were in most cases left rolled up because of lack of space.

In the meantime, men who were to ride in the truck convoy completed various last minute preparations and then joined the rest of the battalion at the railway station where the noon meal was to be served.

After chow, final details for the journey were attended to. Water cans were loaded into each car and kindling wood, together with extra coal, was put aboard.

By this time the forty-five vehicles were lined up, the march order organized, and refueling points made clear to all those concerned. Both train and truck convoys were now ready to roll and at 1330 the train pulled out, seconded an hour later by the truck convoy. The battalion was now on its way to Luneville.

Thirty-nine occupied each boxcar and each man was assigned a specific job. By the time the train had been on its way for a few hours, the general excitement had worn off and monotony took its place. Everyone was as comfortable as could be expected under the circumstances. Days and nights passed as years. That night blackout was enforced and the men were cautioned about not allowing any candlelight outside the cars. — There was little sleep all night long due mainly to the shaking and jolting of the cars and to the newness of this kind of traveling. In addition the inevitable card games did their part keep men awake too.

Most of the men were thoroughly chilled and even though they wore gloves and coats, the stoves in each car did not give off enough heat to make up for the cold air that came through the cracks in the floor of the train.

When the water supply ran out, the men filled cans with snow at each stop the train made and then melted it over the stoves in the cars.



GUNNY SACK PARADE, BLAINVILLE

Sickness on the train was kept at a minimum; however, as it always the case on such a journey, there were several cases of the "GIs". For reasons that need no explanation, an area in one car was roped and these men ate and slept together. After the first day and night on the train, the men were no longer just "plain cold" — — they were so thoroughly "chilled to the bone" that no amount of blankets seemed to warm them. The last day of their journey was no different from the rest, except for the fact they began wearing their steel helmets. On the afternoon of the 9th of January, the train stopped. Word went around that "This was it". However, this was not it since eight miles of countryside separated the men from their destination — — eight miles that were to be made by foot. The combination of full field packs, snow, and bitter cold made this march one that will not soon be forgotten, and when the men finally turned into their billet area they were completely exhausted. There still remained a detail to be picked to return to Luneville for the duffel bags.

All this time the other half of the battalion was having its own difficulties. For its destination the first day the motor convoy selected Vire — — forty miles away from Coutances. Ten minutes after starting on their journey, "B" company's prime mover blew a head gasket, which, considering the rarity of the piece at that time, was near to being a catastrophe. However, necessary repairs were made and the prime mover rejoined the company the following morning. As per schedule, the convoy made Vire the first day and had its bivouac at that village. The following morning reveille was held at 0430 and after a quick breakfast of powdered eggs the unit took up its journey at 0600 with Rambouillet as its next bivouac. The morning was clear and cold and the terrain which up to now had been flat began to break off into small hills, gradually growing higher and steeper as the convoy moved on. On one hill the convoy stalled and the six-ton prime mover, which was pulling a twenty-ton flatbed, was unable to make any progress because of the ice that was on the road. With the help of an air compressor, plus two trucks, they managed to get the prime mover and the flatbed over the hill. — A procedure that was to be used a number of times before the convoy reached the end of the journey. As did the men on the train convoy, so the men in the motor convoy suffered from the cold. The tarps covering the trucks did offer some protection from the wind; however, the cold air soon found its way through the blankets wrapped about every man. Those who rode in jeeps also covered themselves with blankets from head to foot, but due to the fact that the vehicles were not winterized, they soon found that they needed more than blankets to keep them warm. Combat boots became stiff and cold and the men's feet grew so numb that there was no feeling left. At 2100 hours the convoy rolled into Rambouillet and bivouaced in a chateau there. This building was an especially welcomed one, since it was complete with electricity, water, and heat. It was not long before there were fires burning in all of the massive fireplaces.

The next morning the convoy moved out towards Paris. On the outskirts of the city an MP guide met the convoy and took it through the by-pass around the city. Vitre-le-Francais was reached that same day at 1600 hours. A gas detail was sent out, the men had chow, and then most everyone went straight to bed. The morning of the 9th of January, after another powdered egg breakfast, the convoy began its last

day's ride. Tentative arrival time was set at 1300 hours; however, the Vosges Mountain had to be dealt with and there was some concern amongst the officers because many of the vehicles were so big that, the high mountains might be too steep for them to climb. At 1700 hours the convoy was still going through the mountains and the men were stiff and miserable from the cold. At one point an engineer battalion was stalled on a side of the mountain ahead, but permission was given to pass, if possible to do so. Two trucks were placed behind each flatbed with an air compressor in front of the prime mover to pull and the convoy slowly passed by the stalled unit. At 2000 hours that evening the convoy was guided to its billets on the outskirts of Luneville. A total of 430 miles had been covered.

The battalion was by now in dire need of warm clothing. Successful to a certain degree, supply obtained shoe packs, sleeping bags, knee and hip boots and several other badly needed items. Before this issue of clothing, the men had tied gummy sacks around their shoes and ankles in order to keep warm.

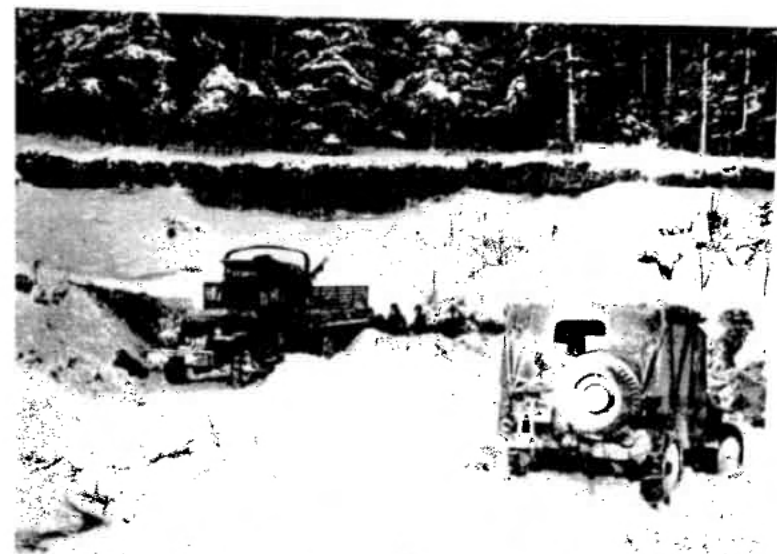
A blinding curtain of snow reinforced by strong wind witness the departure at 1700 hours on the 20th. As the men ate their "K" rations there was no little speculation as to what our new assignment was. Most of the men knew that if the moves toward the front continued at the same rate-experienced during the past weeks, contact with the enemy could not be too far away. Glimmering headlights revealed the huddled troops covered with overcoats and blanket while riding over the snowy white, cold Alsatian plains.

Upon arrival at Wasselone, the battalion was attached to the 35th AAA Brigade to be used as mobile troops in case of German paratroop landings. At the same time the line companies were given work ton on the Vosges defense lines in the area.

A special communications installation was set up for an enemy warning net with Brigade Headquarters and all attached units. All units in that area were on the alert and for the entire ten days spent at Wasselone there was a feeling of expectancy of something big to happen. On January 30th, however the battalion was cancelled and ever the alert was cancelled and the battalion received orders to proceed to Liepvre, France, where it was to be assigned to the XXI corps.



AMERICAN "2 1/2" AND GERMAN PLOW



WORKING GRAVEL PIT IN SNOW

The battalion was assigned by Corps to the 1145th Engineer Combat Group, who gave us our primary mission, direct support of the 3rd Infantry Division. On orders, a move was instituted from Liepvre to Ribeauville, a shell-marked village a few kilometers to the south. On that day Colonel Hull returned from XXI Corps Headquarters where he had acted as provisional Group Commander until Colonel Richards of the 1145th and his staff arrived.

Recon began immediately after they had learned what direct support of the 3rd Division would entail. The main jobs were road maintenance, bridge guard, and the establishing of two water points.

On one occasion, the Ostheim bridge site was attacked by two enemy planes. One man from "A" Company was scratched by bomb fragments while another man was hit by strafing and bomb shrapnel. The bridge which had been hit, was not damaged during this raid. To help avoid further injuries and to add protection to the bridges, smoke pots were immediately dispatched to all bridge guards.

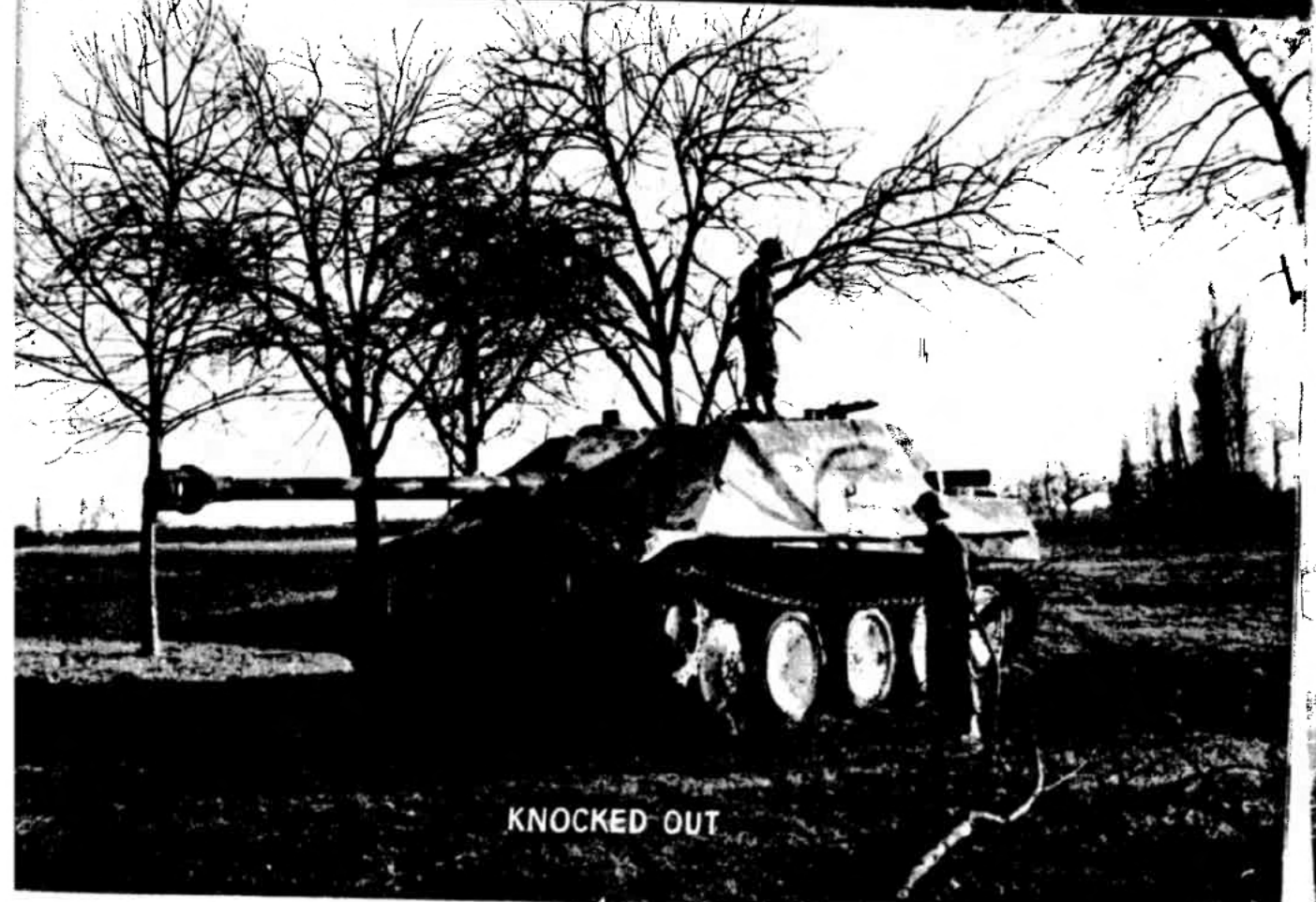
The 3rd Division requested a bridge to be built at Artzenheim where a "Bailey" had been removed the previous night by "C" Company. In addition, all road blocks in the entire road network were to be removed as soon as possible. "A" Company was given the bridge job and the hauling of the bridge materials was given to "B" Company. All night long in congested traffic and in blackout, materials were carried to the site.



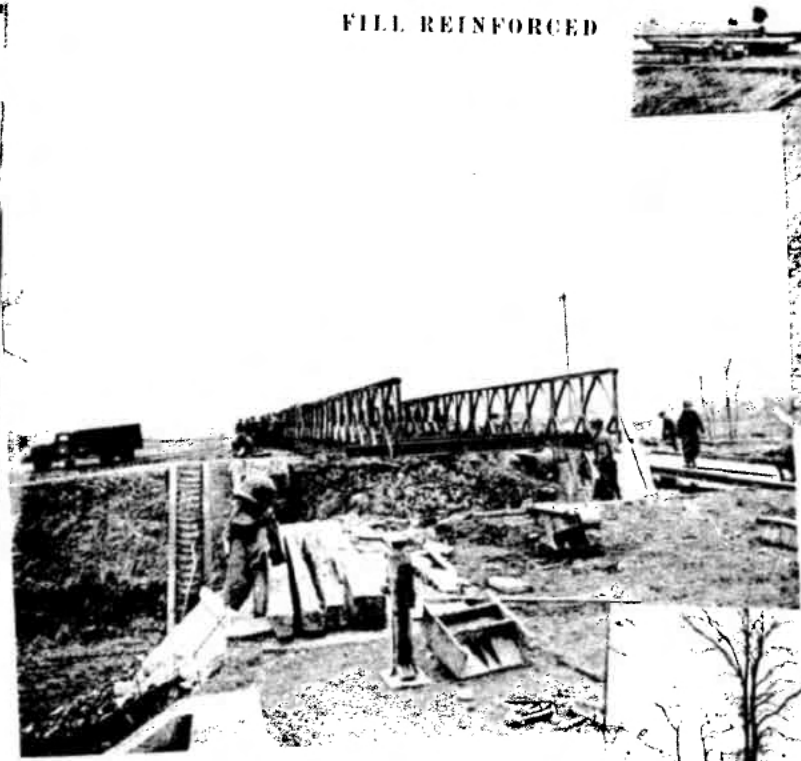
COLMAR CANAL BARGES



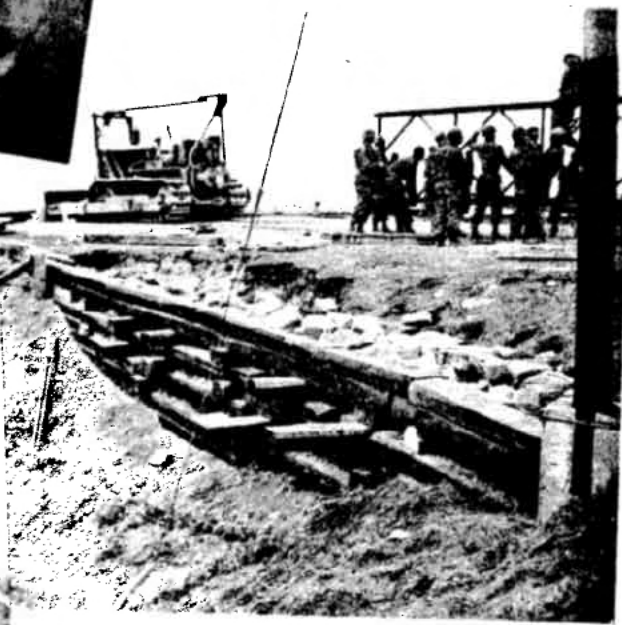
600 LBS. OF PANEL



KNOCKED OUT



FILL REINFORCED



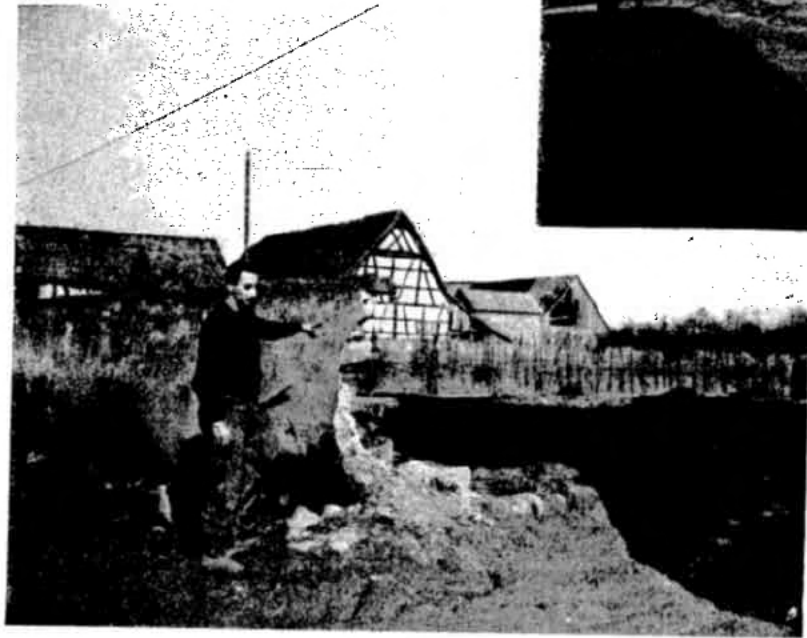
BROWN RIDES AGAIN

LAUNCHING NOSE ALMOST ACROSS



COMPLETED BAILEY

MOTOR-POOL
JEBSHEIM



HOLE IN WALL -
UNQUOTE



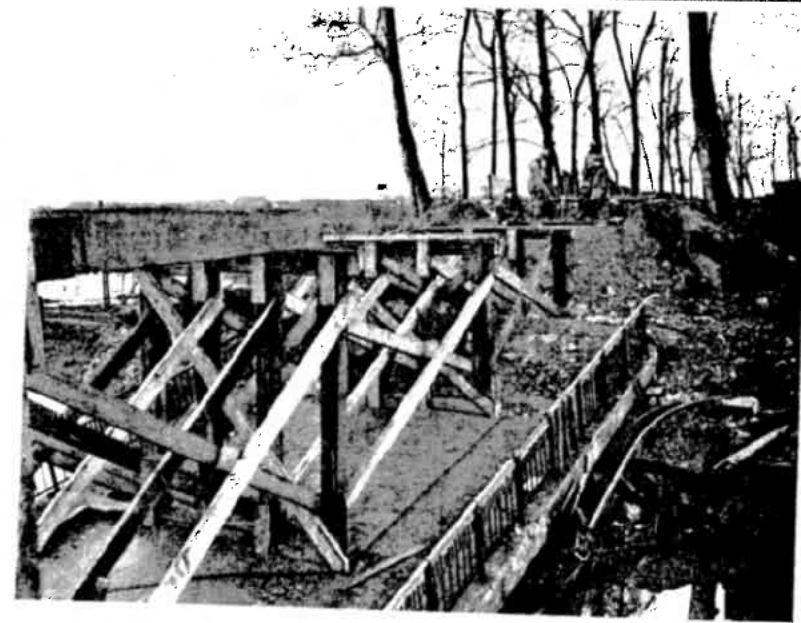
CP ENTRANCE



ON GUARD

During construction, the enemy fired at the site with several rounds of 88's; however, nothing was damaged nor anyone hurt. "A" Company reported the bridge completed by 1200 hours.

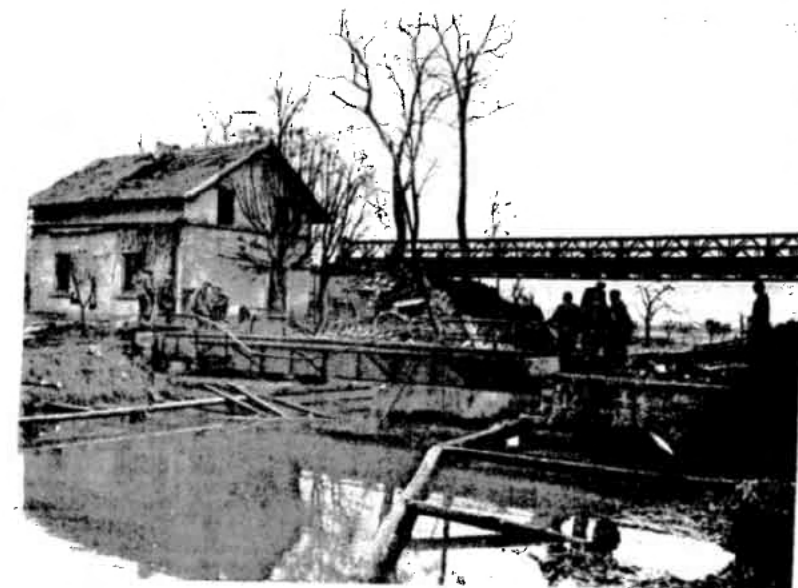
At the Ostheim bridge site harrasing artillery kept coming in day and night. At this time "B" Company moved into Grusenheim, their new bivouac location. The Germans were searching for the location of the big American 240's situated behind the city and started pouring it on thick with their artillery. It was during this raid that Pfc John Klein was killed by a shell fragment. A new location was selected at Riedwahr and in five minutes the convoy with all its equipment, which included dozers mounted on twenty-ton trailers, was turned around and was moving out. Company "C" moved into Muntzenheim and in spite of "88" fire set up their bivouac without injury.

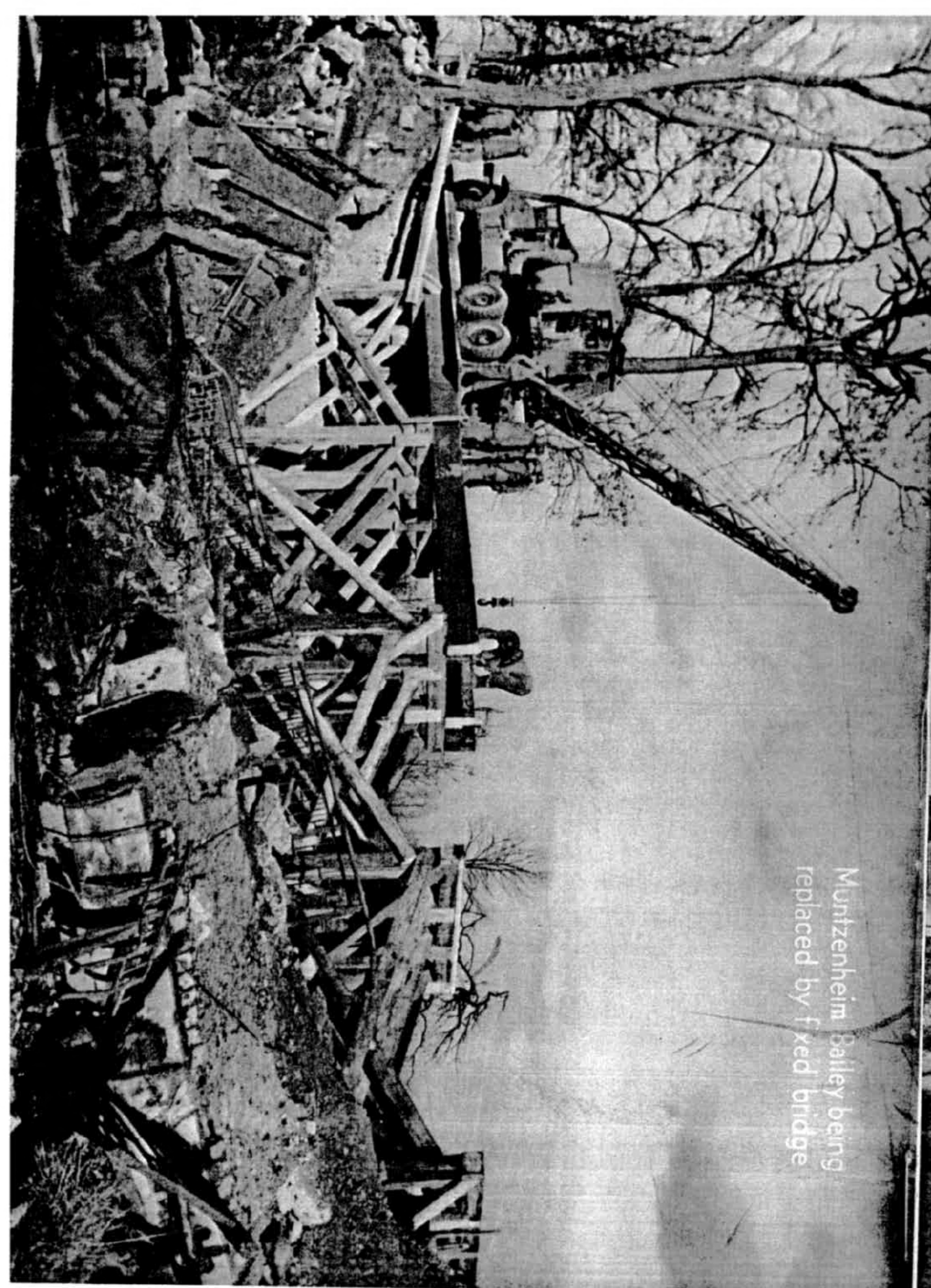


Bailey being replaced by fixed bridge

On February 5th "C" Company had begun two one-way bridges over the Colmar canal and just at this time, when bridge parts were so badly needed, the supplies were delivered — — ending a serious shortage. Due to a dire need of wooden bridge material, the battalion put a sawmill into operation while "A" Company improvised another mill to rip off the rough edges on the slabs of wood being hauled by all of the companies.

C Company by-pass





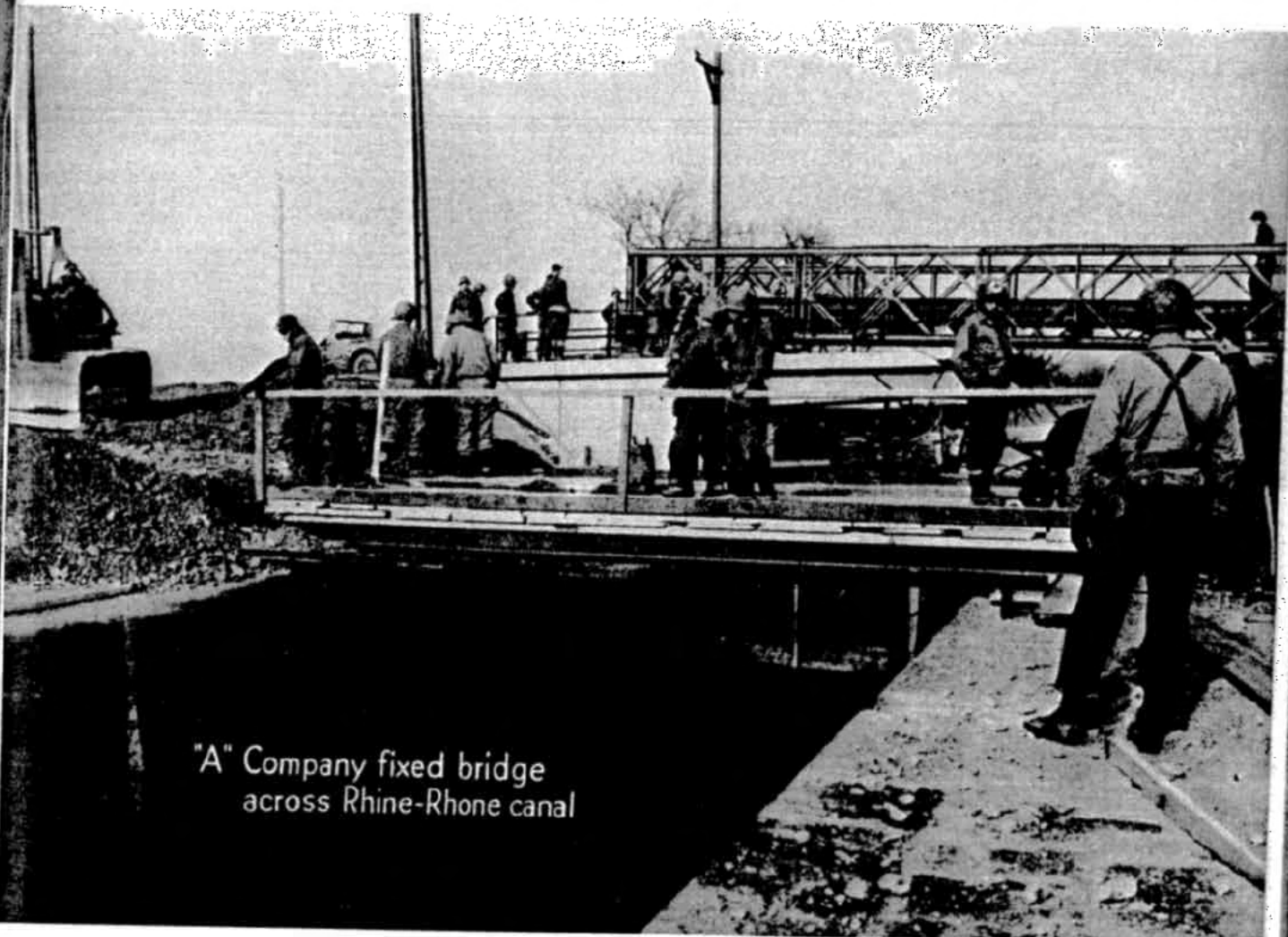
Muntzenheim Bailey being replaced by fixed bridge



DIKE BREAK

One incident occurred that could almost be called a miracle — — — A man in the "B" Company chow line stepped on an S mine, someone yelled, and all that could be seen was flying messkits and mud as the line hit the ground. The soldier who had tripped the mine suffered only a redspot on the seat of his pants where the mine had hit him. For some reason the mine had failed to explode.

A break in the Colmar canal banks was reported and "C" Company in order to plug the gap began filling and stacking sandbags. They were assisted by two platoons from the 3d Division engineers, and finally were relieved by "A" Company.



"A" Company fixed bridge across Rhine-Rhone canal

Muntzenheim was an area that had been used as a dump for German S mines and "C" Company was detailed to blow up the entire dump, which consisted of some 540 mines. The job was done by placing the mines in an abandoned pill box on the Maginot line and "setting off the charge" with a one pound block of TNT.

During this period the work of road repair in the area went steadily on. In some cases the complete road surfacing was removed and new foundations of surface was laid throughout. In such cases as these, the pulverized buildings in the French villages were, by necessity, a valuable source of stones materials.

On the night of February 8th, "C" Company was building an 80' fixed bridge. A crane was being used to lift the heavy loads and as the men worked, the crane boom suddenly slipped, crashed down upon one of the men, Tec 4 Henry Talquist, and drove his body through an open spot in the bridge onto the wreckage below. The only thing that kept his skull from being crushed was the steel helmet that he wore. Seriously injured, he was taken to a rear hospital. To the relief of all, it was later learned that he would live. The men named their bridge the "Henry Talquist Bridge", and on the 9th of February traffic started rolling across the span.

German "liberated loot" came into its own during this period as the ditches and roads throughout the area were littered with the retreating enemy's equipment. The 256th fell heir to a wide assortment, including a 6-ton diesel truck, a lumber trailer, an artillery prime mover, and an odd variety of other trailers, all of which helped relieve the transportation shortage.

By now the drive to eliminate the Colmar Pocket was drawing to a close as far as the 3d Division was concerned and the battalion continued to work on roads through the 14th of February. Prior to, and during the movement of the 3d Division from the Colmar area, the 256th maintained the road from Kayserberg across the mountains to Fraize and finally to St. Die.

The withdrawal of the 3d Division brought to a close a period that the battalion will probably remember longer than any other — — The Colmar Campaign.

On the following page is a copy of the commendation given to the 256th for the work it had done during this operation.

Headquarters XXI Corps
Office of the Corps Commander

201.22

10 Feb 45

Subject: Commendation.

TO : Commanding Officer, 256th Engineer Combat Battalion,
U.S. Army.

1. The operations of the XXI Corps in the Colmar area have been successfully completed. Colmar has been liberated and the enemy has been driven to the east of the Rhine.

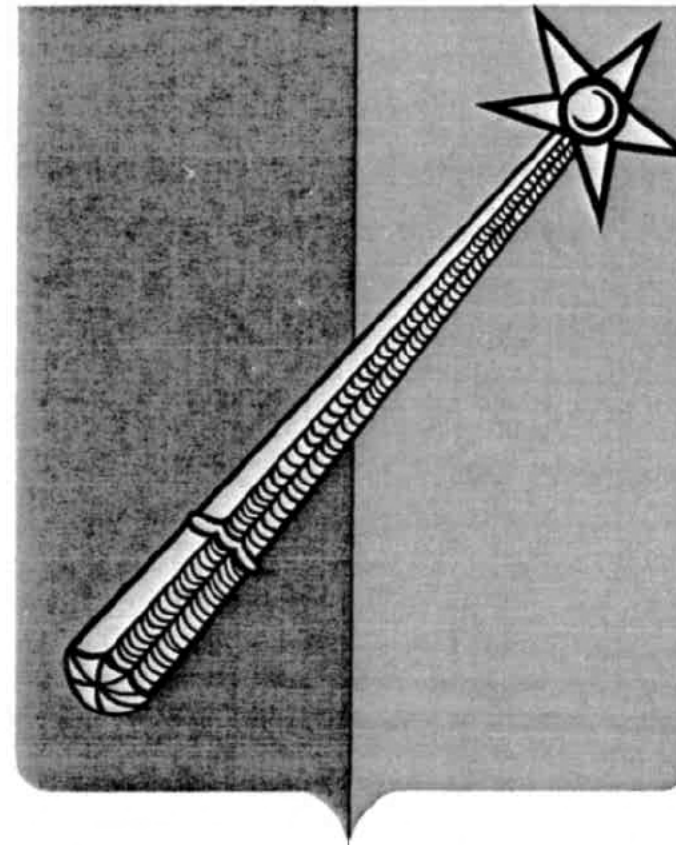
2. The success of these operations has been due to the loyalty, the gallantry and the unselfish devotion to duty of the many thousands of officers, and enlisted men of the units that constitute the XXI Corps.

3. The 256th Engineer Combat Battalion was particularly outstanding in these operations. It performed its assigned missions with great enthusiasm. It completed these missions successfully, contributing materially thereby to the great victory achieved by our units.

4. I wish to commend you, the officers and the enlisted men of the 256th Engineer Combat Battalion for the superior manner in which they performed during these operations. Their actions were superb, and they reflect the finest traditions of the Armies of the United States.

/S/ F. W. Milburn
/T/ F. W. Milburn
Major General, U.S. Army
Commanding

ARMOIRIES DE COLMAR



To commemorate the liberation of Colmar, France, the Mayor of that city authorized the wearing of the Arms of Colmar by the officers and enlisted men of the 256th Engineer Combat Battalion. You will find that the insignia of the Battalion on page 1 has the Arms of the City of Colmar as a center shield.