

HEADQUARTERS
343rd ENGINEERS (GS)
APO 758, U.S. Army

22 April 1945

THIRD ANNIVERSARY MESSAGE

Three years ago today this regiment was activated at Camp Claiborne, Louisiana. Most of you had never worn the uniform of the United States Army before you were assigned to this command during the weeks that followed activation. How you responded to intensive training at Camp Claiborne and Fort Dix and later in the Chiltern Hills of England is a matter of record of which I have always been justly proud. Most of us made many friends in the British Isles and the quality and method of our work and our bearing as soldiers were an exemplary performance for the oncoming millions of our comrades in arms to live up to. Our landing in North Africa among the very first of the task forces to strike the Axis in the Mediterranean Theater won the first campaign star for the regiment. Our record in and around Oran and later across a thousand miles of North Africa has been officially recognized in many commendations from the highest headquarters in the theater.

On the strength of our past record we were selected to help General Patton and the Seventh Army to conquer the Island of Sicily. Our important part in that conquest is a matter of record set down in commendations from both the British and American commands. Another campaign star was added to our flag.

Landing at Salerno in September 1943 we found ourselves a part of a fighting Fifth Army which had recently made headlines all around the world with its initial assault on the continent of Europe. The Italian campaigns were of a type to constantly demand day after day the very best soldiering and engineering that was in each one of us. It was a fall and winter of bad weather, bad roads, and a stubborn enemy. Spring found us carefully preparing to drive the German out of his fortifications along the Cassino front. The successes of the Fifth Army in which we played an important roll has been recorded in commendations from General Clark and our award of the army plaque for meritorious service during the month of May 1944, the month in which the German lines south of Rome were finally broken, are all now a part of history. The pursuit of the enemy north of Rome was unbelievably fast and the performance of the engineers was once more outstanding. Two more campaign stars were added to our flag.

Again on the strength of the record of our superior performances we were chosen to land on D-day with the Seventh Army in southern France. I had never expected to see a need for us to duplicate our record in Italy for speed of construction. However the southern France campaign demanded that we surpass even that performance. Over hundreds of miles we opened highway and railroad lines in unbelievable time. General Patch in a commendation called specific attention to the important roll we played in enabling the Seventh Army to make its phenomenal advance to the German border. We added another star to our flag, the southern France campaign.

A survey of our progress up the Rhone Valley made us realize that each move we had made from Camp Claiborne to the Moselle River had demanded more and more from each one of us. Our tasks became harder as the war progressed. So far we had met each demand we encountered and the Germans were still on their feet. His remaining power was made evident during the winter of 1944 - 1945 when we were called upon to quickly construct a defense line in the Saverne Klain. This, we felt certain was his last offensive effort and so it turned out to be. Spring has seen him driven out of his Siegfried defenses, across the Rhine River, and on to the Elbe River, the last natural line of defense before Berlin. Our part in the German campaign is still fresh in our minds. General Patch has called our first bridges across the Rhine "a fitting climax to a long line of construction projects you have so brilliantly completed".

It is my earnest hope that our most difficult days are behind us as General Patch has indicated. Some of us have been home during the past year and have returned. I am sure that each one of these fortunate men will tell you that he was proud to have been a member of this regiment, which has been widely publicized for its individual and collective accomplishments in newspapers all over the United States.

As each of you in the year to come or at a later date lay aside your O.D.'s and put on your civilian clothes I sincerely hope you will not lay aside your proven ability to become and remain the rest of your lives the very best citizens of the United States as you have been her very best soldiers. You have witnessed during the past three years the evidence of a lack of vigilance on the part of free men to guard their liberties which had been their hard won heritage. The sight of wholesale destruction and suffering has been before you constantly. Let your own experiences serve to keep you constantly alert to any future encroachment on your rights and privileges as free men.

Richard B. Dunbar
 RICHARD B. DUNBAR
 Colonel, CE,
 Commanding

With Our Boys In Service

A press report passed by a field press censor of the sixth army group in France and received here yesterday states that Sgt. Herbert H. Barth of Coos Bay is with a unit that has been directly responsible for utilizing a huge German railroad gun as an emergency bridge over a demolished bridge, with the result that trains carrying thousands of tons of supplies and ammunition have been able to pass across the bridge. Sgt. Barth's unit is Co. F, 343rd engineer regiment.

"When we first surveyed the damaged bridge we saw it was a job that normally would take three weeks," explained Capt. Thomas P. Griffith of Silver Springs, Md., the company commander. "The long, multiple stone bridge stood 75 feet above the water. Two arches had been knocked out by the Germans. We didn't have sufficient supplies on hand. Luckily we located the gun carriage and converted it into a bridge structure. The job took but four and a half days."

CORPORAL GILLIATT WITH ENGINEERS IN ITALY



Corporal Technician Harold L. Gilliatt, husband of Mrs. Gretchen Gilliatt of the Pearl street road, is shown at extreme left in the front row of this group of Army Engineers getting a brief rest somewhere in Italy. Corporal Gilliatt has been in service for 27 months and overseas for two years. He is a veteran of the North African and Sicilian campaigns as well as Italian fighting. The group shown is just getting ready for chow, he said, but took time out to pose for a snapshot. Saying "thanks" for The News service edition, Corporal Gilliatt reports there's no place like Batavia and expressed the wish to be home soon.

Seven Coos Bay Men in Ranks Of Crack Regiment of Engineers

SIXTH ARMY GROUP, France.

The bridge builders of the 343rd Engineer Regiment, with seven Coos Bay men in their ranks, have opened approximately 600 miles of supply lines from the Riviera to the Rhine.

The Coos Bay men are Pfc. Charles L. Hendricks, Pfc. Duncan C. La Chapelle, Pfc. Russell S. Schultz, Sgt. Herbert H. Barth, Pfc. Joseph M. Kyle, Pvs. Donald L. Adams and Pfc. Loyd G. Heath.

Railroads Opened

Tackling the German's best jobs in demolition, these combat engineers have constructed 26 highway and 23 railroad bridges—all large, semi-permanent structures—stretching from the southern France beachhead to the German border. They opened railroads from Marseilles to Lyon 10 days ahead of schedule and won a commendation from Lt. Gen. Alexander M. Patch, Seventh army commander, who said this "life-line" enabled his army to push on despite a threatened supply shortage.

"My men have a pride in their work and their regiment," said Col.

Richard B. Dunbar of Fort Worth, Tex., regimental commander.

Construction men of the 343rd, the oldest engineer unit in combat overseas are versatile. They rebuild harbors, repair roads, clear out blown-up tunnels and operate rock quarries. They removed 10,000 mines north of the Garigliano river, said to be the largest concentration of mines encountered during the Italian campaign.

Veterans of 32 months overseas service, these men wear seven campaign stars. They landed in England in July, 1942, operated in Oran and Tunisia, North Africa, and won many citations for combat work in Sicily and Italy.

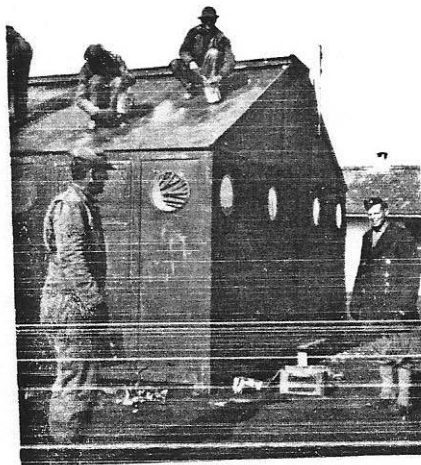
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NO FUEL SHORTAGE THERE

BASIN, Wyo. — (U.P.) — Sign lights in Basin burned brightly for 30 days after the brown-out edict was given. The town received the exemption because it manufactures its own electricity by generators driven by motors using natural gas for fuel.

*Herb says -
"remember when
and where"*

Herb →



← Lt. MAYHEW

THIRD PLATOON OF COMPANY F, 343rd ENGINEERS (GS)

PLATOON COMMANDER ***** 2nd Lt. Kenneth H. Mayhew

PLATOON SGT. ***** S/Sgt. Willie T. Hogan

(242) Toolroom Keeper, T/5 3 (100) Ironworker (521) Basic
Stone, Leo L. Pvt Gabrielson, Bert H. Buonopane, Anthony T., Pvt
(345) Chauffeur 2 (345) Chauffeur
Pfc Bauman, Robert L. Pfc Dominguez, Arturo A.

1st Squad

(651) Unit Foreman, Sgt.
Barth, Herbert H.

(059) Sub-unit Fore, Cpl
Jandreau, Aurel (NMI)

(035) Carp. Bridge, T/5
Hogan, Emil W.

(050) Carp. Gen.
Pvt Kilby, James A.

(050) Carp. Gen.
Jurevics, John (NMI)

(339) Jackhammer Oper.
Munn, Arthur W. Pvt.

(121) Mech. Gen.
Pfc Teto, Frank (NMI)

(171) Quarryman
Pvt Bivens, James F.

(189) Rigger Gen.
Pvt Sicari, Salvatore (NMI)

(027) Demolitionman
Pvt Giangrosso, Joseph (NMI)

(201) Sheet Metal Wkr, T/5
Moore, ~~REPLACED~~ Louis (NMI)

(078) Electrician Gen.
Pvt Lachcik, John J.

(521) Basic
Pfc Kennedy, Charles B.

2nd Squad

(651) Unit Foreman, Sgt.
Harrison, Robert L.

(059) Sub-unit Fore, Cpl
Barnes, Richard L.

(035) Carp. Bridge
Pfc Libby, Leroy J.

(050) Carp. Gen. T/5
Rednour, Walter (NMI)

(050) Carp. Gen.
Pfc Bebout, Harold G.

(339) Jackhammer Oper.
Pvt Lawson, Willie (NMI)

(121) Mech. Gen.
Pvt Frank, Richard H.

(171) Quarryman
Pfc Matuszewski, Wladyslaw

(189) Rigger Gen.
Pvt Minnick, John E.

(027) Demolitionman
Pvt Muench, Joseph W.

(199) R.R. Sec. Hand
Pvt Nash, Richard A.

(078) Electrician Gen.
Pvt Shelton, Noah H.

(521) Basic
Pvt Dempsey, Preston L.

3rd Squad

(651) Unit Foreman, Sgt.
Williams, Robert E.

(059) Sub-unit Fore, Cpl
Niesse, Henry S.

(035) Carp. Bridge
Pvt Hojnacki, Henry J.

(050) Carp. Gen. T/5
Gilliatt, Harold L.

(050) Carp. Gen. T/5
Schwasinger, Willard E.

(339) Jackhammer Oper.
Pvt Tucker, Alfred (NMI)

(121) Mech. Gen.
Pfc Schulz, John K.

(171) Quarryman

(189) Rigger Gen.
Pvt Reed, Carl H.

(027) Demolitionman
Pfc Sacherbacher, Carl (NMI)

(199) R.R. Sec. Hand
Pvt Frazier, Thomas H.

(078) Electrician Gen.
Pvt Winter, Robert (NMI)

(521) Basic
Pvt Deas, George D.