

WORLD WAR II



MEMOIRS

OF

MAJOR FREDERICK C. WOODS

540TH COMBAT ENGINEERS

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At the time of the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, I was a 2nd Lieutenant, U. S. Army, 25 years old stationed in Fallon, Nevada in charge of a Civilian Conservation Corps camp of approximately 150 young men.

On June 15, 1942 I was called to active duty and assigned to the 540th combat engineers at Camp Edwards Massachusetts for training in handling small boat operations for use in amphibious beach landings. There were 26 officers in my group. Our instructors were civilians who were members of the U. S. Power Squadron. We trained daily in small civilian boats that operated around Nantucket, R.I. and Martha's Vineyard. The 540th Engineer Amphibious Combat Regiment was activated shortly after the entrance of the United States into World War II. It was the first engineer regiment designed and equipped to carry the war to the enemy by means of sea-born attack on hostile shores. This regiment partook in beach landings in North Africa, Sicily, Corsica, Italy, France and Germany. Our land training at Camp Edwards consisted of calisthenics, running a mile or so and two hours a day swimming in the icy cold salt waters of the bays. One morning I awoke and the whole world was silent. I was deaf. That afternoon I visited our battalion doctor. He took a look and found that wax in my ears had expanded from swimming in the salt water and had cut off most of the outside sound. He fixed the problem and I was happy to be in the real world again.

On August 6, 1942 our battalion joined a huge convoy of ships bound for somewhere. We were not told of our destination. The ships were so crowded that we took turns of twelve (12) hours above and twelve (12) hours below decks. Food was served twice a day in our mess kits. We arrived in England on September 2, 1942.



1. Arrive
Liverpool, England
September 2, 1942
2. To Harwich, England
September 3, 1942
3. To Firth of Forth, Scotland
September 24, 1942
4. To North Africa from
Liverpool, England
October 18, 1942

Our convoy of about 400 ships was attacked several times by German submarines as we changed course every few hours and zig-zaged across the Atlantic. As officers our duty on the ships was to man the anti-aircraft guns. We had about 15 minutes of on board training on how to aim and fire these guns that we had never seen before. Fortunately our particular ship was not attacked. A number of others were attacked when we got close enough to land and within flying range of German planes.

We knew at least one of our ships was torpedoed and sunk. We never found out if they picked up any survivors. Naturally, the ship captains could not slow up or change position in such a convoy. This was our first real experience of being in a war with our enemy and we were quite concerned and apprehensive as to what would follow.

Finally after 27 days of cruising about the Atlantic our group arrived in Liverpool, England and were met and loaded on trucks. We did not know how or why we had been split up but myself and several other officers went to the town of Harwich on the East coast of England not far from London. Lt. Eugene Cousineau from Louisiana and I were assigned quarters with an English Family consisting of a man and his wife and a daughter of about our age. These people were wonderful and took us in as if we were their family and fed us and looked after us.

SIDE NOTE

The extra good looking daughter probably in her early 20's told us that she would "knock us up" in the morning. Cousineau looked at me and I looked back. We soon found out that this "knock up" was early in the morning and on our bedroom door.

Our room was on the top floor. We would buy beer, bring it back, open our window and put it on the roof. There was no such thing as ice and this was the coolest place.

It was here that we learned of air raids and blackouts. At least once or twice every

night the air raid sirens would sound and we would jump out of bed and rush down to our family. They would lead us hand-in-hand through complete darkness to their designated air raid shelter.

The air raids on England were devastating. Everywhere was rubble from bomb destruction. Each morning we would walk over to our headquarters that was in a secure basement to get our latest briefing. After about three weeks we were told that we would be leaving for Scotland to a small town north of Edinburgh located on the bay named Firth of Fourth to continue our training in beach landing crafts. We had tearful goodbyes with our new family and promised to see them again. We never did, but we constantly thought about them.

Arriving in Scotland the officers were put up in Quonset huts and the men in tents. It was here that I met Captain John D. Mason who occupied the army cot next to mine. John graduated from Marion Military Institute in Marion, Alabama and was an excellent officer in every way. Mason was designated as our company commander and I was designated as second in command.

In Scotland we followed an intensive amphibious training program along with many Canadians. We were slated to make an assault amphibious beach landing with the Canadians at Dieppe, France across the English Channel. At the very last minute the American participation was cancelled.

DIEPPE, FRANCE

What follows here is a brief of what happened to the raid.

On August 19, 1942 "Operation Jubilee" ended with a dramatic result! The allies counted 1,380 dead (913 Canadians), 1600 wounded and over 2,000 made prisoner. The air battle was just as disastrous. The Royal Air Force lost 107 aircraft, the Germans about 40. In the area of Dieppe many civilians were wounded. In less than ten hours battle almost 1800 people lost their lives, which shows clearly the intensity of the Battle of Dieppe.

We were completely down hearted at what happened to our Canadian friends



5. Assault Landing
 Mers-El-Kebir
 Oran, Africa
 November 8, 1942

when we talked to the few who came back. The Germans knew about the proposed assault and were there waiting.

We were unhappy to be called off but now we knew how lucky we were.

It was two years after the raid on Dieppe, I learned that the Canadians landed in Juno, at dawn on 6th June 1944, the 2nd Canadian Division liberated Dieppe.

NORTH AFRICA

We continued intensive training for assault landings and were finally moved from our camp to Liverpool and onto ships for the North African Assault.

We were loaded on a beautiful Dutch converted passenger ship. Officers got a regular stateroom.

My cabin mate was a doctor who was with the 33rd EVAC Hospital from Duke University. He arrived in our cabin with two bottles of scotch whiskey and immediately dropped and broke one. I helped him drink the other one only because I didn't want him to drink alone.

For approximately twenty-one days we sailed in confusing patterns. More battle ships, aircraft carriers and cruisers joined the convoy, which stretched further than the eye could see. Zig-zagging its way, the convoy at first headed for Boston, then changed its course for England, Bermuda, Dakar and Canary Islands, until finally on November 8th, 1942 the assault was made on the coast of French North Africa. It was our first taste of real war.

Our Battalion functioned as "Mine Clearers" and "Shore Parties" for our combat team landing near Mers El Kebir, Algeria. Two casualties brought our group down to 24 officers.

As soon as our combat team had everyone ashore and well established, two officers were selected to attend a special mine removal school that was located in Oujda, French Morocco, an oasis town in the desert. I was one of the officers and

Ted Raymond from Kansas City was the other officer. We packed our jeep and left Mers El Kebir on route 2 for Oujda, which was approximately 230 km south east of Oran.

On the way down we kept a close watch for a small sector of the country that is owned by Spain. We had been briefed that if we happened over the border into this part of the country we would be taken as wartime prisoners. Ted said that maybe it wouldn't be too bad a place to spend the rest of the war.

We decided against it and continued on to Oujda. After arriving in Oujda we met several French and English officers who were also there for training and two more from Sidi-Bel-Abess, the headquarters of the French Foreign Legion.

There was a general in charge of the camp who started our day at 5:00 AM with roll call, calisthenics and a one-mile run. The desert around us was endless. Each morning a camel herd would come by. You could smell them coming from a mile away. If you turned to look at them, the general would issue another mile run. NICE GUY!

The plastic mines, which could not be found with our hand metal detectors, had just begun to show up.

We learned how to locate the mines, the type and kind and how to remove the booby traps and diffuse them. We also spent many hours on plane recognition. The planes would be flashed for seconds on a camera screen. It was our chore to identify whose planes, what type and how many were in the group. It was not hard to do once you got the hang of it. Ted and I learned - we had to. The day ended at 5:00 PM - twelve hours.

The course lasted for four days. A lot of time was spent on our hands and knees probing with bayonets to locate the devilish deadly mines. We were glad it was over but knew we had learned a lot. On the way back we joined our friends from the French Foreign Legion who took us through their compound. It was very much an eye opener - No thanks, we'll pass.

Upon returning to our battalion we put on daily instructions for officers and men in mine warfare, mine removal and plane recognition. Our troops thought that we were geniuses and they felt much safer in our hands. Remember, most of our men were just kids and we were not much older.

I remember one evening later, we had an air raid alert. Ted Raymond was shouting "strafing planes" and running for one of the machine guns. He was aiming and firing while others were still looking. A good guy to have by your side. Ted was missed by inches but we lost one officer and six of our men. Ted and I kept in touch through the years. Ted and his wife Nina at this time are in a nursing home in Florida.

In April 1943 we moved to a new Bivouac near Arzew. This became the headquarters of the First Engineer Amphibian Brigade, under its direction we received rigorous amphibian training. Practice landings were made during the day and night. We knew then that we would be going somewhere on a complete amphibious assault. We received all new equipment. This was our first acquaintance with the new amphibious truck called the "DUKW". We renamed it the "DUCK".

Here we were also given training in demolition, mine detecting, rifle marksmanship and both officers and men were given strenuous physical exercises. You had to be a young man to keep up with the flow. I qualified in the use of arms as a .30 caliber rifle expert and a .45 caliber pistol expert. I still have my .45 caliber pistol that I carried throughout the war.

In this program more units were attached forming a command of well over 5,000 troops.

Sometime in late May 1943 we moved to Bizerte, Tunisia and were attached to the Third Infantry Division to act as their Amphibious Engineers.



SIDE NOTE

We found out that our new friend, the amphibious "DUCK" WAS SOMETHING SPECIAL. The Ducks were used to unload supplies and equipment from the ships that could not come ashore.

The "DUCKS" would line up and be loaded. It took only a few trips for our men to spot the good things coming off. One of our "DUCKS" had a 55 gallon drum of 190 proof medical alcohol on it. Somehow the drum found its way to a small twelve (12) room hotel that we had "liberated" for an officers club while we were in MERS-EL KEBIR. The drum was put on a sawhorse stand, a spigot was added and fruit juice came from somewhere. IT WAS HELP YOURSELF TIME!

SICILIAN CAMPAIGN

We landed on the hostile shores of Sicily on D-Day, 10 July 1943. The First Battalion landed at Licata, Sicily. Our code name was "Joss". After a very successful placing of the Third Infantry Division ashore, we then operated trucks with front line supplies for the Second Armored Division, First Division, Third Division, Forty-fifth Division and the Eighty-Second Airborne Division.

The Second Battalion, my battalion, moved to Palermo on 31 July 1943. At Palermo my battalion supported the infantry on two missions, which helped in the advance on Messina and the consequent clearing of the enemy from the entire island of Sicily. On August 8, 1943, I was designated to take a detachment of 48 enlisted men to function as a landing party for an assault landing behind the enemy lines in the vicinity of St Agata. The landing came as a complete surprise to the enemy and we suffered no casualties. Three days later I was again selected and with 48 enlisted men we functioned as the landing party for an assault landing behind the enemy lines at Brolo. This landing met stiff resistance. Two of my men were killed and three were wounded. Shortly after these two amphibious landings, enemy resistance collapsed and Messina fell to the Allies on 17 August 1943, ending the Sicilian campaign. By this time we were hardened veterans having made four amphibious assault landings.

THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN

With the close of the Sicilian campaign, the regiment assembled in the vicinity of Termini Immerse. All amphibious equipment as well as organizational and individual equipment was cleaned, repaired and reconditioned. Another amphibious operation was pending and the organization was relieved from assignment to the Seventh Army, re-assigned to the Fifth Army and attached to the Forty-fifth Division. The officers and men of the regiment prepared themselves for the next enemy blow. On September 4, 1943 we loaded on (LCP'S) invasion craft and the ships carrying assault troops entered the Gulf of Salerno for the invasion of Italy on September 9, 1943. We were the landing party for the Forty-fifth Division which was in reserve, we did not land until D+1. We debarked and assisted in the landing of initial troops and equipment of the Forty-fifth Division. We organized Red Beach No. 1 and Blue Beach No. 2. We operated these beaches until the end of September. The beaches were heavily mined and at the mouth of the Sele River on just 1400 yards frontage, we removed 2,000 mines. Approximately 6% of the mines were booby trapped. No casualties were incurred during this dangerous operation. During the initial phase of the operation, the regiment was under heavy artillery fire, in addition to almost hourly bombing and strafing attacks by enemy aircraft. It was a continuous diving for cover of our shelter which we had covered with sand bags, and wondering if we would get a direct hit. On 12 September the Second Battalion made a special beach landing with the Rangers under the command of Colonel Darby.

SIDE NOTE

Toward D-Day + 5 food supplies got so low that the cooks who were feeding us, including some Navy guys, were faced with giving out . . . Yes, "K" rations and "C" rations. One Sgt. said to the cook "THIS FOOD IS TERRIBLE." The cook's reply was "If you can do better, have at it." Sgt's. reply "Get me permission and I'll do much better!" He got permission from an officer standing close by. With his officer's "OK" he left. About an hour later he had the problem solved. He presented the surprised Mess Sgt. with a ropè, to which was attached a full-sized cow! The cook said "How did you do it?" "I paid perfectly good Lira to a farmer for that delicious item. He was also amply reimbursed by surviving the invasion." Everyone enjoyed the nice juicy steaks.

Our 6th amphibious beach assault landing took place at Maiori, Italy, a few miles from the important city of Salerno. Here we put The Rangers ashore and helped in establishing a firm foothold behind the enemy lines.

The enemy could not stand the pressure exerted by the Allies, and on October 1, 1943 the important city seaport of Naples fell.

We immediately entered the city of Naples and were then assigned the task of clearing the harbor of Naples. Not only had the port been bombed by allied planes, but the enemy, before retreating, had damaged most of the port facilities. Out of the chaos created by the enemy, we used dynamite, bulldozers, torches and hacked roads through the debris, clearing the docks and leveling buildings for storage space. Within 24 hours, ships were being unloaded in the harbor and the Port of Naples once again came to life. The city of Naples itself had suffered. The enemy in retreat had demolished the aqueduct, the sole source of water for the civilian population. We cleared the railway tunnel near Agnoli of mines and booby-traps.

On the beaches of Bagnoli, a suburb of Naples, approximately 500 TM42 and TM43 mines were lifted. This particular mine field contained two (2) mines for every yard of frontage. This was the most difficult mine field thus far cleared because of the density and number of booby traps encountered. Clearing the beaches of mines started at the water front and our men worked side by side on hands and knees probing for mines. Many were so booby trapped that we could not diffuse them. We had put small hooks on long ropes that we attached to the mines. We then cleared everyone to a safe distance, jerked the ropes and exploded the mines. Hundreds of mines had been buried to keep our troops from crossing the beach from the water. These anti-personnel mines were called the "Bouncing Betsys". When they were stepped on they would bounce about 5 feet high and explode. The shrapnel from the explosion would wipe out everyone within a 50 yard radius. When stepped on, the soldier could feel it move and would shout "Betsy". Everyone would hit the sand. Some made it and some did not. These were difficult mines to detect. In spite of this our casualties were not too heavy.

SIDE NOTE

After we had everything under control, Col. Manning suggested that we go back to Naples for an evening of fun.

We rounded up Dr. Cohen, and took Colonel Marvin's (our Regimental Commander) Command Car. He was off somewhere. A command car is like a six passenger open touring car. It had a top but no side windows. The total interior was covered with luxurious leather. After visiting a couple of nightclubs and bars we decided to go back to our bivouac area. We arrived at the parked car. It was "SURPRISE, SURPRISE". Someone had stripped the car of all its beautiful leather! Not one-inch left, anywhere. Springs on seats and backs were now showing. Nothing to do but drive it back, park it and get out of sight

When the regimental commander called his driver the next afternoon it was his turn. "SURPRISE, SURPRISE." We were told that he was so "PISSSED OFF" he could hardly talk. Colonel Marvin was about 5'-1" tall and could be a very mean S.O.B. We never said a word.

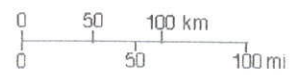
In early 1944 our regiment was selected to be the shore party for another amphibious assault, and was attached to the Third Infantry Division for operation "SHINGLE".

I was sent to Caserta, where I and others were locked up in a former jail for total security purposes. I worked with the Special Planning Section of the Third Infantry Division at Fifth Army Headquarters. Our prime purpose was to facilitate close coordination of technical planning for the forth-coming operation. Comprehensive analysis was given to maps and photo layouts of the beach area, (to include x-ray beach network), in order that the location of exit roads, traffic circulation, dump sites, etc. could be determined. I must have been excellent in my planning because the General of the Third Division (whose name I have forgotten) gave a recommendation that I receive the Distinguished Service Medal. I was given this medal later at a regimental headquarters gathering. Colonel Marvin our Regimental Commander pinned the medal on me and called me



Italy

- ★ National Capital
- Region Capital
- Province Capital
- Secondary City
- Primary Road
- Railroad
- Administrative Border
- International Border



6. Assault Landing
Palermo, Sicily
June 10, 1943
7. Assault Landing
Salerno, Italy
September 9, 1943
8. Assault Landing
Anzio, Italy
January 22, 1944
9. Piombino, Italy
June 9, 1944

"CAPTAIN FRED WOODS, OUR ONE MAN ARMY". This name stayed with me until I left the 540th engineer group.

ANZIO-NETTUNO OPERATIONS (ITALY 1944)

The 540th Engineer Combat Group embarked from Naples on January 19, 1944. We landed at 2:00 am on January 22nd on X-ray Beach, South of Nettuno. My men, who were first ashore, by "H-3" (which is 3 hours before the assault troops would land) landed with huge rolls of bias tape strapped on their backs. Each had a metal picket with a green reflector attached to it. The bias tape was attached to the picket, which was shoved into the sand at the water's edge. The men were spaced about six (6) feet apart. They then inched forward on hands and knees probing for mines with their bayonets. The bias tape unwound as they moved forward. Every so often a new picket and reflector would be wound around the bias tape and stuck in the sand. Each tape marked a safe lane for our infantry combat troops to cross the beach. This operation was very tedious, nerve racking and scary. Fortunately, there was little initial opposition, due, no doubt, to the surprise element of the operation.

SIDE NOTE

We went ashore at H-3, which is 2:00 AM minus 3 hours or 11:00 PM. I had been up and awake for 36 hours on the landing craft and getting troops ashore and assembled. I was exhausted and stood against a tree and fell asleep. When I awoke there were two German soldiers sitting on the ground near by with a white surrender cloth on a stick. I almost wet my pants! Soon thereafter, a Headquarters Lt. Colonel came up and asked where I had been. I told him I had to rout these two Germans out of a hole and take them prisoners. I was congratulated! "WAS I BRAVE OR WHAT?"

However this calm did not last long. By February 6, 1944 the intensity of enemy action had become so severe that V1 Corps moved its headquarters underground. During one of the many raids on Anzio and the beach area a bomb landed at Company E Officers' Bivouac killing three (3) more officers and numerous enlisted men. The Germans bombed and strafed our "EVAC" hospital. Seventy-eight casualties were a result of this direct hit.

A direct hit landed on the sleeping quarters of the First Battalion Medical Detachment killing three more officers. No enlisted men were hurt. Bad luck continued. During the evening of March 1, 1944 a lone plane was heard droning overhead. Military personnel, including Ack Ack gunners, who had insufficient training in aircraft recognition, believed it to be a British Lancaster lost on it's way from a bombing mission and returning to it's base. Instead the lone plane was a German Bomber, which dropped an 1800-kilo and a 250-kilo bomb. The smaller bomb found its mark in the sleeping quarters of Company "F". The toll was 21 enlisted men killed, 19 wounded and 3 buried in the ruins who were reported "missing in action". The big bomb was a dud but fell on the sleeping quarters of Lt. Colonel Kent. He received minor injuries.

Some enlisted replacements started to come in. These were young men who had never been in combat. They were scared to death. It took some time to get them settled down and more or less used to the continuous German shelling of our beach.

Each officer had his own foxhole to sleep in. The hole was dug and lined with sandbags. Timbers and metal sheets from bombed-out structures were placed over the tops and sandbags were placed over these. We were reasonably secure except from a direct or nearby bomb hit.

To grasp the full significance one must realize that we spent over four months on the beach that consisted of only a narrow strip of land. A shell or bomb dropped within the small area would readily cause damage to equipment and inflict heavy losses to personnel.

It is fair to say in retrospect that the fighting forces had never before met with such determined resistance as was displayed by the Germans. The period on the beachhead was synonymous with continuous air raids and incessant shelling.

One morning we were overjoyed to see some of our bombers coming in from the South. As we watched and cheered, the biggest air armada of the war had

arrived. There were 2000 planes in the air and were dropping bombs on Monte Casino in the mountains above us, from where the Germans were shelling us on the beach. This is also where the caves of the monks lived who made the famous and great Benedictine and Brandy liquor.

As we watched, the sky was dotted with planes being shot down by German anti-aircraft and parachutes were opening everywhere. The bombers kept coming for hours. When the bombing stopped the Germans came out of the caves and started shelling us again.

One day a German plane came over and dropped leaflets saying that they were coming with four Panzer Divisions and were going to drive us back into the water.

THEY CAME BUT COULD NOT GET THROUGH OUR COMBAT TEAMS WHO HELD.

A joyous day was experienced when the forces from the South met our forces on the Anzio Beachhead. The union on the main front with the beachhead forces occurred on May 25, 1944 at 7:30 PM. With the union of the fighting forces the beachhead no longer existed but in the cemetery in Anzio there lies over 10,000 men and officers.

SIDE NOTE

We had been on the beach weeks without a bath or clean clothes. Daily routine was to loosen your belt and sprinkle "DDT" powder on the white lice down below. We heated hot water for a shave, now and then, by starting a jeep until the water got hot, then draining the hot water into a steel helmet for a shave. I still don't use shaving cream.

The forces coming up from the South brought a hot water machine call a "YAN-KEE BOILER". They set up a big shower tent. As you went in they took all your clothes and away you went into that heavenly hot water shower. They even had some sort of green soap. It smelled like the soap you wash dogs with. It proba-

bly was. It got rid of whatever and stopped most of the itching.

At the end of the shower we were handed all clean clothes, not ours, but clean. None were the same size. We weren't going for a best-dressed competition so we didn't care.

Clothes swapping with our buddies came later. Somehow everyone was happy just to be clean.

Then came a meal that wasn't "C" or "K" rations. "C" rations came in a small can and was some kind of mixed stuff that tasted O.K. when hungry. "K" rations came in a box that looked like a "Cracker Jack" box. It had some sort of dry food and always two cigarettes. "AWFUL."

Following the fall of Rome, on June 4, 1944 our advanced elements of the organization moved into the Rome area and engaged in locating mines, dusting for disease prevention, sanitation and inspection of buildings (chosen for Fifth Army Headquarters) for mines and booby traps. We removed many mines. The Germans had booby-trapped some of the toilets by placing charges in the tanks. When a toilet seat was moved or sat on, the end came. "No pun intended." Swinging doors were booby-trapped. The main post office was cleared of all mines, EXCEPT ONE. The Germans had removed some of the concrete floor in the basement and buried a 500-pound mine, covered the hole and put about a ton of coal over it. We missed this one and four days later it blew up. Fortunately, it went off at noon and the building had not yet been occupied.

Five days later we were assigned the task of clearing the Port of Piombino for allied use. I had been re-assigned to Headquarters and Colonel Dan Manning was designated as Executive Officer. Because Piombino had not yet been taken, the First Battalion moved into the vicinity of Grosseto to await the fall of the Port.

The next day Manning had word that Piombino was safe. He was directed to go to Piombino and said he would take Capt. Woods, the one man army, with him.

On the way we spotted some German soldiers in a culvert by the side of the road. We jumped out of the jeep and into a ditch. We pointed our guns at them and told them to come out. They came out with hands above their heads. We checked them, pinned a note on them and sent them walking in the direction of our troops. I think they were happy to be alive and to surrender.

We continued into Piombino and after we had gotten into the town we found that it was still occupied. We hid the jeep in a still standing building and spotted a squad of Germans coming down the street. We rushed into a building and up to the second floor. The room was very large and had big velvet drapes hanging on the walls. We got behind the drapes facing the door. I said, "don't shoot unless I do." He gave me a thumbs up. We could hear the clomp of their shoes on the side-walk and then in the building. One soldier came up the stairs and into our room. WE DID NOT BREATHE. He looked around and left. WE BREATHED. A squad of German soldiers wouldn't make a good match. We stayed hidden until dark, found our way to the jeep and took off in a hurry.

The next day we re-entered the town. Elements of the infantry were still actively engaged in rounding up rear German defenders and preventing damage and sabotage by the enemy.

On June 25, 1944 our regiment was relieved from assignment to the Fifth Army and was assigned to Allied Force Headquarters and attached to the 36th Infantry Division for movement. We moved to a temporary bivouac area about five miles North of Rome and then to a new bivouac area South of Battipaglia. The regiment engaged in intensive amphibious training programs with the 36th Infantry Division and schedules were coordinated with all elements of the group engaged in many landing exercises with the Regimental Combat Team Units. On July 8th, a big change was initiated, and we were attached to VI Corps for planning and training. Amphibious training continued until August 6th at which time initial combat loading of our Assault Beach Group was started.

On August 8, 1944 organizational equipment was loaded on invasion craft.



10. Assault Landing
St. Raphael, France
August 15, 1944

11. Storm Boat Assault
Rhine River
Manheim, Germany
March 26, 1945

FRANCE

We left Italy on August 12, 1944; D-Day was August 15th. The First Battalion of the 540th Engineer Combat Regiment landed with the Thirty-sixth Infantry Division and struck the assigned beaches at 8:00 AM. The Second Battalion assaulted Red Beach (St Raphael) with the 142nd Infantry at 10:00 AM.

The Thirty-sixth Division launched a successful attack on St Raphael where we were located. Two enemy planes appeared and launched a glider bomb, hitting LST 282 causing a 50% loss of personnel and equipment. We lost one enlisted man killed, eleven wounded and two officers wounded. The Company immediately started clearing out the mined areas of Red Beach and with extensive demolition broke out the reinforced concrete 8 ft. high by 4ft. thick anti-tank blocks.

Mine clearing, removal of roadblocks and clearance of huge sections of massive seawalls continued. At around 7:00 PM Red Beach opened for unloading of craft and landing ships. In St Raphael we lost two men killed, two fatally injured. Twenty-seven men were injured when a bulldozer engaged in removing concrete blocks detonated Teller-mines deeply encased in the blocks. On the 3rd of September we moved to Lyon, France and removed street obstacles, mines and barbed wire entanglements in order that equipment and trucks could proceed.

On the 24th of September a secret memorandum from HQ, Seventh Army notified us that we were selected to train in the operation of storm assault boats for the crossing of the Rhine River in support of the VI Corps.

The Battalion moved to selected sites and started training on September 26, 1944. Initial training took place on the Doubs River under guidance of the 1553 Engineer Heavy Pontoon Battalion and final landing exercises were planned for the Rhone River under the supervision of the 85th Engineer Heavy Pontoon Battalion.

On the 8th of October, my contingent moved to Epinal on the Moselle River. We set up just outside of a huge cotton mill. The next day M. Giradot, the owner of

the mill sent a man over to invite me to his house for dinner. It was a real treat to get some good food and meet his wife Helen and five year old daughter that they called "Minoche" (pronounced Minooch).

After dinner we settled down to talk and drinks. We became friends at once. The next morning he sent a man over to my tent and moved me into his house. One question that he had was: "What are you going to do with the Russians after the war?" Every evening as long as I was there we would eat, talk and drink Calvados, a very strong liquor made from plums.

They were wonderful people and I had a good chance to practice my French. While there, Second Battalion built a bridge across the Moselle River. The bridge was still there when we visited them after the war.

On November 15 we moved to Blainville. Intensive river crossing training was conducted. Training included storm and assault boat training, infantry support, heavy pontoon raft training and maneuver cable training.

The storm boats were small boats that could pack in up to twenty infantry soldiers. Each boat was powered by two 150 H.P. outboard Evinrude motors. Each boat was run by two of our men. The boats were designed to cross the water at full speed and run up on land at still full speed. It was anticipated that they would be good for only one crossing. Once there you stayed. "THIS ASSUMPTION WAS CORRECT."

Training and planning for the assault river crossing was completed on November 23, 1944. All river crossing equipment was loaded and the following units were attached to our regiment: The 85th Engineer Heavy Pontoon Battalion, 424th Engineer Dump Truck Company A, 84th Engineer Camouflage Battalion and the 69th Chemical (smoke generating) Company. The Regiment and attached units were placed on a six-hour alert and all engineer work was reduced in the assigned area to that of only an emergency nature.

On November 24, 1944 during a river crossing experiment, a raft carrying a 57 MM gun capsized with its crew. Eight enlisted men were lost as a result. The experiment, although costly, determined its impracticability.

The following day the six-hour alert was cancelled. All units attached to the Regiment were relieved. River crossing equipment was loaded on trucks and stored in truckloads in proper tactical formation in Foret De Mondon. The 85th Engineer Heavy Pontoon Battalion was assigned to guard and maintain all equipment. Everyone went back to continued training, mine removal, etc.

A quiet Christmas day was observed by all. I took the time to visit the Giradots in the mill at Epinal. I presented them with four 5-gallon cans of gasoline for their car and a basket of fruit for their daughter. It was a wonderful Christmas. The little girl had never seen or tasted oranges.

On December 30, Captain Donald E. Casey, from Houston, Texas was designated as Assistant S-3 and I was designated First Battalion Executive Officer.

On the last day of 1944 German planes strafed Captain Hudson's vehicle and he and his driver were both killed. ON OUR LEFT FLANK GREAT TROUBLE WAS BREWING.

On the morning of January 1, 1945, we got word that three German armies (Fifth, Sixth and Seventh) totaling 25 divisions (11 of them armored) struck six unsuspecting American Divisions and overran their lines. WE KNEW THEN THAT WE WERE IN FOR BIG TROUBLE.

All hell broke out. The weather was ice cold and snow was up to our ass. The Germans came screaming out of everywhere. I was First Battalion Executive Officer when I got word that the First Battalion was alerted by Task Force Huddleson to act as front line infantry. HELL, WE WERE NOT INFANTRY.

If my memory serves me right this is what took place and it was my duty to see that it took place.

At 2:45 AM Company "B" was ordered into assembly area and organized into infantry teams to assist 117th Cavalry Recon and repel enemy attack.

At 4:30 AM Two platoons of Company "A" were sent to assist in relieving a platoon of Company "A" 125th Armored Engineer Battalion who were completely cut off.

At 5:00 AM One platoon of Company "A" was sent to vicinity of BAERENTHAL to act as reserve for Task Force Huddleson.

At 5:00 AM One platoon of Company "C" was ordered to CP of Company "A", 125th Armored Engineer Battalion to support the defense area.

At 7:00 AM The remainder of Company "C" was ordered into line on the left flank of Company "B" 62nd Armored Infantry Battalion.

At 11:30 AM One platoon of Company "C" supporting Company "A", 125th Armored Engineer Battalion was ordered into positions in the vicinity of BAERENTHALL, relieving one platoon of Company "A" who joined the remainder of the Company.

At 11:35 AM One platoon of Company "C" in position in the vicinity of BAERENTHALL was subjected to heavy mortar, machine-gun, and rifle barrage. This element was forced to withdraw after suffering heavy casualties.

At 12:00 NOON First Battalion Headquarters was attacked and came under heavy mortar fire. After burning all records and documents, I ordered all personnel to withdraw and re-assemble in LA PETITE PIERRE. We were moving so fast that we had no time to take any of our personal belongings. (I EVEN HAD TO LEAVE 2 BOTTLES OF GOOD U. S. BOURBON.)

At 12:00 NOON Elements of Company "C" stationed in Battalion Headquarters area were forced to withdraw and to re-assemble in LA PETITE PIERRE. This element also came under heavy mortar, machine-gun and rifle fire.

At 2:30 PM Company "A" was ordered to fall back and re-assemble in the vicinity of OBERSOULTZBACH. No report was received from Company "B" which was repelling the enemy attack with 117th Recon. Company "C" reported to have two platoons holding high ground North of PHILLIPSBURG. They were told to fall back and re-assemble at LA PETITE PIERRE.

As of February 15, 1945 the 540th Engineer Combat Regiment located in Lutzelbourg, France was reorganized and re-designated per war department orders. The new designation was now the 540th Engineer Combat Battalion.

The First Battalion of which I was the Executive Officer, was re-designated as the 2832nd Engineer Combat Battalion Both battalions were assigned to VI Corps.

On March 1, 1945 the 540th was relieved from attachment to the VI Corps and reverted to the Seventh Army Control.

Sometime after a long, hard, snowy, winter of laying mines, erecting barbed wire and manning outposts – all believed that the Germans would try to cross the river against us. THEY DID NOT! The Group Headquarters moved to ARRACOURT, the 2832nd, my Engineer Combat Battalion moved to BURES.

We watched the Germans across the Rhine River and tried to imagine how a crossing in small boats would end up. We could not see many German soldiers. We had a small 37mm gun on wheels that we had fun trying to shoot any German soldiers that we could spot. We did have a few good shots and finally got a couple of them riding bicycles. OPEN SEASON ON GERMANS, NO LIMIT. WHAT FUN!!

We were having a meeting talking about the Rhine crossing. Colonel Marvin said he wished he had a little more idea of what the shore on the other side looked like.

I was elected to cross with one sergeant. It was a scary midnight operation. We

rowed across, pulled the boat up behind a shelled-out small building and started to walk. I forgot to mention that we had put on civilian clothes over our uniforms. We had not gone 50 yards when a German civilian came up to us. I pulled out my .45 automatic pistol and stuck it in his side. I told him we were going to walk along the shore and he was going with us. He spoke English enough to understand. We spent about three hours looking, then decided to go back across. When we got to the skiff we told him he would have to go with us. On the way across he kept talking about his wife. I told him he would be released as soon as our troops made the crossing.

We had a safe journey back and were immediately taken prisoners by some of our troops. They took us to Headquarters where we were released.

I requested that the prisoner be released as soon as possible. They agreed.

We met with our people and turned over a lot of valuable information, which did greatly help our beach landing. Later the Sargent and I were each given the Bronze Star Decoration for our nice boat ride and I was promoted to the rank of MAJOR.

On March 26, 1945 at 2:30 AM we had all of our boats in the water and loaded with the Third Infantry Division troops.

At a prearranged signal all of our boats were started. The noise must have awakened every German from the river side to Berlin. IT WAS SOMETHING TO HEAR!

When our boats started across, it was a race into HELL AGAINST HEAVY GUN-FIRE

We lost 39 of our men and our Doctor Bernard Cohen and I both were wounded.

HOORAY! WE GOT PURPLE HEARTS!

Oh well, we made it.

Captain Cohen, our doctor, was new to us. He was from New York and Jewish, a wonderful guy. He was constantly afraid of being captured by the enemy because he was a Jew.

We told him not to worry we would not let them take him alive. I'm sure that was not too much consolation.

All of this happened at WORMS/MANNHEIM, our Rhine River Crossing site. Our next little outing was to help take the city of HEIDELBERG. There was stiff resistance and after taking the city we found that most all of the enemy were HITLERS' TRAINED ELITE CHILDREN that gave us so much trouble.

We continued our forward progress checking for and removing barricades and mines.

On one occasion we entered a beautiful house that was used as a German General's headquarters.

We checked it all out and to our surprise and joy we found about a thousand bottles of French champagne in the basement wine cellar.

It took about three seconds to take and load all of it into a truck! We even shared a little of it with the First Battalion, not too much though. WE WERE THIRSTY!

From the time that the 540th Engineer Combat Group crossed the RHINE RIVER until the surrender of the German forces on May 9, 1945, the 540th had traveled a distance of 251 miles. The period that saw the final collapse of the Reich, appropriately enough, witnessed the 540th Engineer Combat group accomplishing the greatest number and most varied missions of any war.

I was in a hospital in CHERBOURG, FRANCE, being treated for a hernia caused



MILITARY RECORD AND REPORT OF SEPARATION CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE										
7. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL DUCHAC JANET A			8. ARMY SERIAL NUMBER N 765 305		9. AUS GRADE 2 LT	4. ARM OR SERVICE ANC	5. COMPONENT AUS			
6. ORGANIZATION THAYER GENERAL HOSPITAL NASHVILLE TENNESSEE				7. DATE OF BELIEF FROM ACTIVE DUTY 30 SEPT 46		8. PLACE OF SEPARATION SEP GEN FT BRAGG N C				
9. PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES 203 W HORNER ST ATMORE ALA					10. DATE OF BIRTH 27 APR 22		11. PLACE OF BIRTH ANTIGO WISC			
12. ADDRESS FROM WHICH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE BOUGHT SEE 9					13. COLOR EYES BROWN	14. COLOR HAIR BROWN	15. HEIGHT 5-9	16. WEIGHT 135	17. NO. OF DEPENDENTS 0	
18. RACE WHITE <input type="checkbox"/> NEGRO <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (Specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		19. MARITAL STATUS SINGLE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MARRIED <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/>			20. U.S. CITIZEN YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		21. CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND NO. NURSE 74.200			
MILITARY HISTORY										
22. REGISTERED YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	23. LOCAL S. S. BOARD NUMBER NONE		24. COUNTY AND STATE NONE		25. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY ON ACTIVE DUTY SEE 9					
26. DATE OF ENTRY ON ACTIVE DUTY 1 APRIL 45			27. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY AND NO. NURSE GENERAL DUTY 3449							
28. BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS NONE										
29. DECORATIONS AND CITATIONS AMERICAN CAMPAIGN MEDAL WORLD WAR II VICTORY MEDAL										
30. WOUNDS RECEIVED IN ACTION NONE										
31. SERVICE SCHOOLS ATTENDED NONE					32. SERVICE OUTSIDE CONTINENTAL U. S. AND RETURN DATE OF DEPARTURE DESTINATION DATE OF ARRIVAL NONE NONE NONE					
33. REASON AND AUTHORITY FOR SEPARATION RELD FR AD PAR 17B(1)(A) AR 40-20 & RT-1 (DEMOS) LO-AGD WASH DC 30 SEP 46										
34. CURRENT TOUR OF ACTIVE DUTY						35. EDUCATION (years)				
CONTINENTAL SERVICE			FOREIGN SERVICE			GRAMMAR SCHOOL		HIGH SCHOOL	COLLEGE	
YEARS	MONTHS	DAYS	YEARS	MONTHS	DAYS	6	6	3		
1	6	0	0	0	0					
INSURANCE NOTICE										
IMPORTANT IF PREMIUM IS NOT PAID WHEN DUE OR WITHIN THIRTY-DAY PERIOD, INSURANCE WILL LATER MAKE CHECKS OR MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO THE TREASURER OF THE U. S. AND FORWARDED TO COLLECTIONS DIVISION, VETERANS ADMINISTRATION, WASHINGTON 25, D. C.										
36. KIND OF INSURANCE Ret. Adv. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> U.S. Govt. <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/>		37. HOW PAID Allowment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Direct <input type="checkbox"/>		38. Effective Date of Allet. Best Discharge 30 SEPT 46		39. Date of Next Premium Due (one month after 30) 31 OCT 46		40. PREMIUM DUE EACH MONTH 6.60	41. INTENTION OF VETERAN TO Continue <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue only <input type="checkbox"/> Discontinue <input type="checkbox"/>	
42. SIGNATURE OF OFFICER BEING SEPARATED <i>Janet A. Duchac</i>					43. PERSONNEL OFFICER (Type name, grade and organization - signature) F A BAKER CAPT FA <i>F A Baker</i>					
44. REMARKS (This space for completion of above items or entry of other items specified in W. D. Directives) LAPEL BUTTON ISSUED NO TERMINAL LEAVE DUE OFFICER					45. REEMPLOYMENT COMMITTEEMAN COPY (For State Director of Selective Service for State shown in Item 12)					

by a near hit bomb explosion., waiting to be taken to the U.S. by hospital ship when I learned that the German forces had surrendered.

I left CHERBOURG, FRANCE on a hospital ship on June 6, 1945 and arrived in the U.S. on June 18th. This trip was like a vacation: smooth water, good food and plenty to drink even though it was 190 proof medical alcohol, furnished by nurses and mixed with orange juice.

I was in THAYER GENERAL HOSPITAL, Nashville, Tennessee on August 15, 1945 when cessation of hostilities ended in the Pacific Theatre.

For me and the six other officers of our original group of 26 that survived, THE WAR WAS OVER.

SIDE NOTE

I thought many times now that I was back and alive that I would not have missed it for a million dollars but wouldn't go through it again for five million dollars.

At Thayer General Hospital I met Lieutenant Janet Aileen Duchac, Army Nurse. Y'all know the rest.



The Legion of Merit

Established by Congress on 10 JUL 1942, in four degrees: Chief Commander, Commander, Officer, and Legionnaire; for award to personnel of Armed Forces of friendly foreign nations and personnel of the Armed Forces of the United States and the Philippines. Awarded for actions since the Presidential Proclamation of Emergency, 08 SEP 1939, "For Exceptionally Meritorious Conduct in the Performance of Outstanding Service."

This is as close as the United States has come to creating an Order of the European type. It is the first specific decoration awarded to foreigners and the first decoration of the United States to be awarded in different degrees.

Chief Commander; usually awarded to Heads of Foreign States Commander; usually awarded to Supreme Commanders of Foreign Military Officer; usually awarded to Officers of Foreign Military Legionnaire; usually awarded to Officers of the United States Military

Second and subsequent awards are denoted by bronze Oak Leaf Clusters; a silver Oak Leaf Cluster is worn in lieu of five bronze.

Designed by COL Townsend Heard, USA



The Bronze Star

Established by order of the President on 04 FEB 1944, awarded to personnel of the US Armed Forces, who on or after 07 DEC 1941, distinguished themselves: "For Heroic or Meritorious Achievement of Service, not involving aerial flight, in connection with Operations Against an Opposing Armed Force."

Bronze "V" device worn to denote Valor/Heroism. Second and subsequent awards are denoted by bronze Oak Leaf Clusters; a silver Oak Leaf Cluster is worn in lieu of five bronze.

Designed by Bailey, Banks, and Biddle



The Purple Heart

Originally established by Commander-in-Chief George Washington on 07 AUG 1782, at Newburgh on the Hudson, New York, as an award for outstanding military merit, or the 'Badge of Merit'. The decoration was in the form of an embroidered, heart-shaped badge of purple cloth and only three non-commissioned officers received the Order at that time. Though never officially abolished it was not again awarded for almost one hundred and fifty years.

Upon its revival in 1932, as the Purple Heart, the decoration was to be awarded to members of the US Army in two categories: "For being wounded in action in any war or campaign under conditions which entitle the wearing of a wound chevron." and "For those persons who perform any singularly meritorious act of extraordinary fidelity or essential service."

In 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued an Executive Order which provided that the Purple Heart would be made available to members of all the US Armed Services who were wounded in action. Since then the Purple Heart has become one of the most highly respected decorations of the US Armed Forces. The decoration holds a very unique position in that it can be earned in only one way, by being wounded. An attendant requirement is that the wound must have been received as a direct result of enemy actions.

Second and subsequent awards are denoted by bronze Oak Leaf Clusters; a silver Oak Leaf Cluster is worn in lieu of five bronze.

Designed by Elizabeth Will; Sculpted by John Sinnock



European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal

For service in the US Armed Forces within the European-African-Middle Eastern Theater of Operations from 07 Dec 1941 to 08 Nov 1945.

One bronze service star may be worn for each campaign; one silver service star in lieu of five bronze:

- Egypt-Libya – 11 Jun 1942-12 Feb 1943
- Air Offensive, Europe – 4 Jul 1942-5 Jun 1944
- Algeria-French Morocco – 8-11 Nov 1942
- Tunisia – 17 Nov 1942-13 May 1943
- Sicily – 9 Jul-17 Aug 1943
- Naples-Foggia – 18 Aug 1943-21 Jan 1944 (Air); – 9 Sep 1943-21 Jan 1944 (Ground)
- Anzio – 22 Jan-24 May 1944
- Rome-Arno – 22 Jan-9 Sep 1944
- Normandy – 6 Jun-24 Jul 1944
- Northern France – 25 Jul-14 Sep 1944
- Southern France – 15 Aug-14 Sep 1944
- Northern Apennines – 10 Sep 1944-4 Apr 1945
- Rhineland – 15 Sep 1944-21 Mar 1945
- Ardennes-Alsace – 16 Dec 1944-25 Jan 1945
- Central Europe – 22 Mar-11 May 1945
- Po Valley – 5 Apr-8 May 1945

Ribbon colors decoded: Background; brown represents the sands of North Africa and the Middle East, green represents the forests and fields of Europe Center Grouping; red/white/blue represents the United States Left Grouping; green/white/red represents Italy Right Grouping; black/white represents Germany
Designed by Thomas Hudson Jones, Reverse by A.A. Weinman



American Defense Service Medal

Established by order of the President on 28 Jun 1941, for service in the US Armed Forces for one year during the 'Limited Emergency' proclaimed by the President on 08 Sep 1939, or during the 'Unlimited Emergency' proclaimed by the President on 27 May 1941. The one year must have been between 08 Sep 1939 and 07 Dec 1941.

The Foreign Service Clasp may be worn to denote service overseas during this period; a bronze service star on the service ribbon.

Designed and Sculpted by Lee Lawrie



Victory Medal, World War II

Established by Congress on 09 Jul 1945, and awarded to members of the US Armed Forces for service between 07 Dec 1941 and 31 Dec 1946.

Designed by Thomas Hudson Jones

DECORATIONS AND CITATIONS RECEIVED

LEGION OF MERIT MEDAL

BRONZE STAR MEDAL WITH 2 OAK LEAF CLUSTERS

PURPLE HEART

EAME CAMPAIGN MEDAL WITH

8 BRONZE STARS, 1 SILVER STAR AND 1 ARROWHEAD

AMERICAN DEFENSE SERVICE MEDAL

WORLD WAR II VICTORY MEDAL

BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS

TUNISIA, NORTH AFRICA

ALGERIA, NORTH AFRICA

FRENCH MORACCO

SOUTHERN FRANCE

SICILY

NAPLES-FOGGIA

ROME-ARNO

RHINELAND

CENTRAL EUROPE

COMBAT ASSAULT BEACH LANDINGS, NINE (9)

NOVEMBER 8, 1942

MERS EL KEBIR, ALGERIA, AFRICA

ASSAULT LANDING PARTY FOR THE 45TH INFANTRY DIVISION

JULY 10, 1943

LICATA, SICILY

ASSAULT LANDING PARTY FOR THE 3RD INFANTRY DIVISION

AUGUST 8, 1943

ST. AGATA, SICILY

I WAS DESIGNATED TO TAKE A LANDING PARTY OF 48 ENLISTED MEN FOR AN ASSAULT LANDING BEHIND THE ENEMY LINES.

AUGUST 11, 1943

BROLO, SICILY

I WAS DESIGNATED TO TAKE ANOTHER LANDING PARTY OF 48 ENLISTED MEN FOR AN ASSAULT LANDING BEHIND THE ENEMY LINES.

SEPTEMBER 9, 1943

SALERNO, ITALY

ASSAULT BEACH LANDING FOR THE 45TH INFANTRY DIVISION.

SEPTEMBER 12, 1943

MAIORI, ITALY

ASSAULT SPECIAL MISSION BEACH LANDING FOR THE RANGERS UNDER COMMAND OF COLONEL DARBY.

JANUARY 22, 1944

ANZIO, ITALY

ASSAULT BEACH LANDING FOR THE 3RD INFANTRY DIVISION.

AUGUST 15, 1944

ST. RAPHAEL, FRANCE

ASSAULT BEACH LANDING FOR THE 36TH INFANTRY DIVISION.

MARCH 26, 1945

RHINE RIVER, WORMS-MANHEIM, GERMANY

ASSAULT BEACH LANDING IN STORM BOATS FOR THE 3RD INFANTRY
DIVISION.



Army of the United States

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

This is to certify that

MAJOR FREDERICK C WOODS, O-368 221, CORPS OF ENGINEERS

*honorably served in active Federal Service
in the Army of the United States from*

15 JUNE 1942

to

25 MARCH 1946

Given at SEPARATION CENTER, FORT SAM HOUSTON, TEXAS

on the 25th *day of* MARCH 19 46

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Robert F. Gleim".

ROBERT F. GLEIM
COLONEL CAC

**MILITARY RECORD AND REPORT OF SEPARATION
CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

Permit Issued

Def. Serv. Medal, World War II Victory Medal issued at USARHS, Opelika, Alabama 23 Sept '47

1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL Woods Frederick C		2. ARMY SERIAL NUMBER 0-368 221	3. AUS. GRADE Major	4. ARM OR SERVICE OS	5. COMPONENT OrC
6. ORGANIZATION 540th Combat Engineers APO 758 c/o Pm New York N Y		7. DATE OF RELIEF FROM ACTIVE DUTY 25 Mar 46	8. PLACE OF SEPARATION Separation Center Fort Sam Houston Texas		
9. PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES 101 Belvoir Street Alexandria Virginia			10. DATE OF BIRTH 17 Jun 16	11. PLACE OF BIRTH Princeton N J	
12. ADDRESS FROM WHICH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE SOUGHT Unknown			13. COLOR EYES Blue	14. COLOR HAIR Brown	15. HEIGHT 5' 9 1/2"
			16. WEIGHT 150 LBS.	17. NO. OF DEPENDENTS 3	
18. RACE WHITE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NEGRO <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (specify) <input type="checkbox"/>		19. MARITAL STATUS SINGLE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MARRIED <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (specify) <input type="checkbox"/>		20. U.S. CITIZEN YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
21. CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND NO. Engineer					

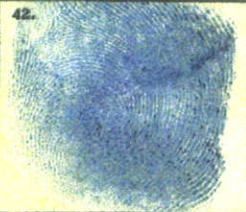
MILITARY HISTORY

SELECTIVE SERVICE DATA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	22. REGISTERED YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	23. LOCAL S. S. BOARD NUMBER --	24. COUNTY AND STATE --	25. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY ON ACTIVE DUTY Minden Nevada
26. DATE OF ENTRY ON ACTIVE DUTY 15 Jun 42		27. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY AND NO. Combat Engineer Unit Commander 1331		
28. BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS Southern France Rhineland Tunisia Algeria French Morocco Sicily Naples Foggia Rome-Arno Central Europe				
29. DECORATIONS AND CITATIONS Legion of Merit The Bronze Star Medal with 1 Oak Leaf Cluster Purple Heart Campaign Medal with 8 Bronze Service Stars American Theater Campaign Medal American Defense Service Medal Victory Medal Arrowhead				
30. WOUNDS RECEIVED IN ACTION 22 Mar 45 ETO				
31. SERVICE SCHOOLS ATTENDED Surveying Topography Ft. Belvoir Mine warfare Morocco Africa 14 wks Aircraft Recog Algeria Africa			32. SERVICE OUTSIDE CONTINENTAL U. S. AND RETURN	
			DATE OF DEPARTURE	DESTINATION
			6 Aug 42	ETO
			6 Jun 45	USA
33. REASON AND AUTHORITY FOR SEPARATION Release under provisions of RR 1-5 (Demobilization)			DATE OF ARRIVAL	
			1 Sep 42	
			18 Jun 45	
34. CURRENT TOUR OF ACTIVE DUTY			35. EDUCATION (years)	
			GRAMMAR SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL
YEARS	MONTHS	DAYS	YEARS	MONTHS
0	10	28	2	10
			COLLEGE	
			8	4
				1

INSURANCE NOTICE

IMPORTANT IF PREMIUM IS NOT PAID WHEN DUE OR WITHIN THIRTY-ONE DAYS THEREAFTER, INSURANCE WILL LAPSE. MAKE CHECKS OR MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO THE TREASURER OF THE U. S. AND FORWARD TO COLLECTIONS SUBDIVISION, VETERANS ADMINISTRATION, WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

36. KIND OF INSURANCE Nat. Serv. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> U.S. Govt. <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/>	37. HOW PAID Allotment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Direct to V. A. <input type="checkbox"/>	38. Effective Date of Allotment Discontinuance 30 Nov 45	39. Date of Next Premium Due (one month after 38) 31 Dec 45	40. PREMIUM DUE EACH MONTH D-\$3.40 *N-\$6.12	41. INTENTION OF VETERAN TO Continue <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Only <input type="checkbox"/> Discontinue <input type="checkbox"/>
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42.  RIGHT THUMB PRINT	43. REMARKS (This space for completion of above items or entry of other items specified in W. D. Directives)
	(1) Lapel Button issued
	(2) Qualification in Arms; .30 cal Rifle Expert Jun 43 .45 cal Pistol Expert Jun 43
	(3) ASR Score (2 Sep 45) 157

44. SIGNATURE OF OFFICER BEING SEPARATED <i>Frederick C Woods</i> FREDERICK C WOODS Major CE	45. PERSONNEL OFFICER (Type name, grade and organization - signature) <i>J. E. Harrington Jr</i> J. E. HARRINGTON JR Capt AUS Asst Pers O
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CHS

VI CORPS COMBAT ENGINEERS WWII → NEWS & ADDITIONS → Announcements, Get Well Wishes & Farewells



Passing of Frederick Conrad Woods - 540th

Started by Walt's Daughter , Dec 05 2006 12:30 AM

Walt's Daughter

Posted 05 December 2006 - 12:30 AM

Thanks for sending this one too Tony!

Frederick Conrad Woods

Frederick Conrad Woods, 90, of Daphne died Wednesday, Aug. 9, 2006, at his home. He was a life-long resident of Baldwin County.

Woods was a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army, 540th Combat Engineers, and a veteran of World War II who served in the European Theatre.

He was a graduate of Alabama Polytechnic Institute, now Auburn University. Family members said he was a well-known architect throughout the Southeast. Some of his projects included the Greek Orthodox Church in Malbis, Christ the King Church in Daphne and the Mobile Metro Jail Complex, among others.

Survivors include his wife, Aileen Woods; four daughters, Jahala Woods, Janine Woods and Jan Zietz, all of Mobile, and Stephanie Markey of California; two sons, Erik Woods of Houston and Edward Woods of Seattle; a brother, Erik Woods of Virginia; and two sisters, Inez Gleason of New Jersey and Betty Thomulka of Nevada.

A memorial Mass will be held at 10 a.m. Monday at Christ the King Church in Daphne.

The family suggests memorial donations be made to the Mobile Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals or Bay Rivers Art Guild.

Arrangements are by Cason Funeral Service in Foley.

Source: Mobile Register, The (Aug/17/2006)

[Back to Announcements, Get Well Wishes & Farewells](#)

VI CORPS COMBAT ENGINEERS WWII → NEWS & ADDITIONS → Announcements, Get Well Wishes & Farewells

Name	Rank	ASN	DateofActionorWound	Award
Wagner, Walter W	1st Lt	0-1101256	8-1-1943	Soldiers Medal
Wagner, Walter W	1st Lt	0-1101256	8-8 to 8-12-1943	Distinguished Unit Badge
Walter, William P	Sgt	12089122	8-8 to 8-12-1943	Distinguished Unit Badge
Walters, John	Pfc	36173953	3-26-1945	Bronze Star
Waltz, Luster V	Pfc	35432159	3-26-1945	Purple Heart
Waltz, Luster V	Pfc	35432159	3-26-1945	Bronze Star
Ware, John D	1st Lt	0-436977	7-11-1943	Purple Heart
Webb, Aubrey J	Pfc	34275201	5-8-1944	Purple Heart
Weingarten, Milton F	Cap	0-418785	2-27-1944	Purple Heart
Wernert, Maurice J	Pvt	37388523	8-1-1943	Purple Heart
West, Robert L	Pvt	16084194	8-8 to 8-12-1943	Distinguished Unit Badge
Westphal, Leo R	S/Sgt	6858790	11-8-1942	Silver Star
Whates, John	1st Lt	0-1692585	3-1-1944	Purple Heart
Whates, John	1st Lt	0-1692585	3-1-1944	Purple Heart
Whates, John	1st Lt	0-1692585	4-19-1943 to 5-6-1945	Bronze Star
Whitton, Charles E	Tec 5	33273380	7-31-1943	Purple Heart
Wiggins, Howard W	Pfc	33312607	3-26-1945	Purple Heart
Wilson, Thomas	Pvt	37087100	8-8 to 8-12-1943	Distinguished Unit Badge
Wojtunik, Theodore	Pfc	38336678	8-8 to 8-12-1943	Distinguished Unit Badge
Wood, Samuel A Jr	Tec 5	38305446	8-1-1943	Purple Heart
Woods, Frederick C	Major	0-368221	3-26-1945	Purple Heart
Woods, Frederick C	Cap	0-368221	1-22-1944	Bronze Star
Woods, Frederick C	Cap	0-368221	7-5 to 9-6-1944	Legion of Merit
Young, Curtiss E	S/Sgt	39826614	11-24-1944	Soldiers Medal
Zitman, John E	1st Lt	0-1101231	8-15-1944	Silver Star
Zorio, Palmo P	Pvt	34124072	8-8 to 8-12-1943	Distinguished Unit Badge

This list may contain errors or inadvertant omissions by the Army Corps of Engineers or myself during compilation. If you spot an error, I would appreciate hearing from you. Thank you for your assistance.