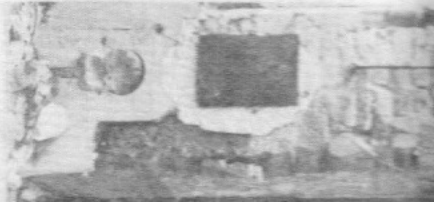
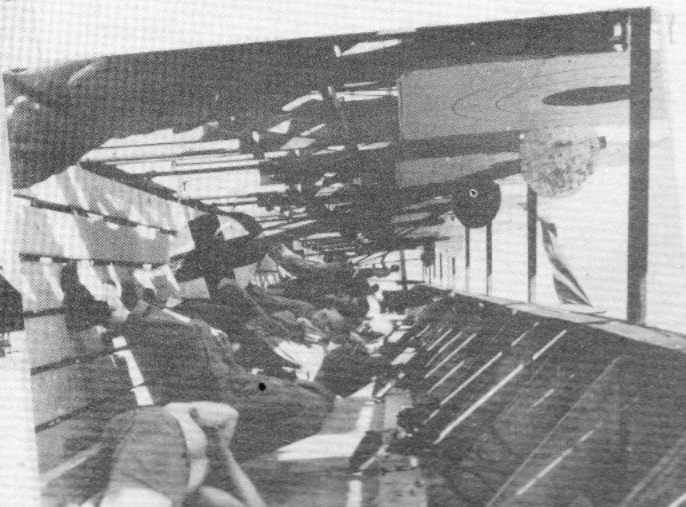
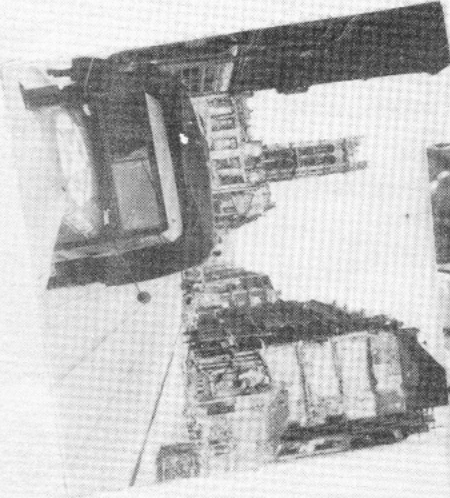
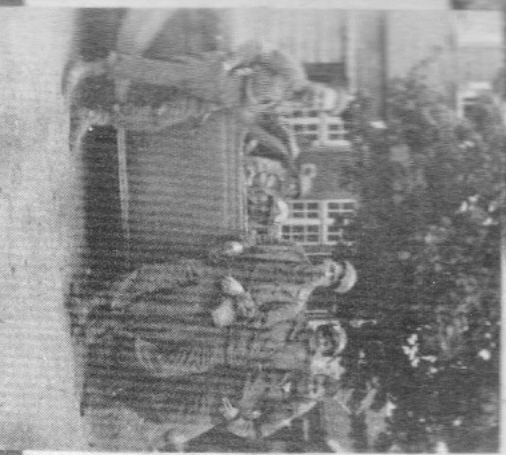
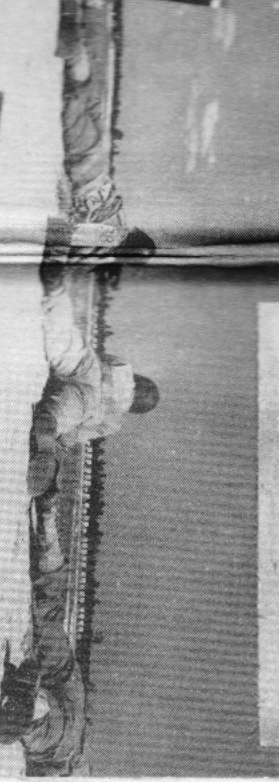
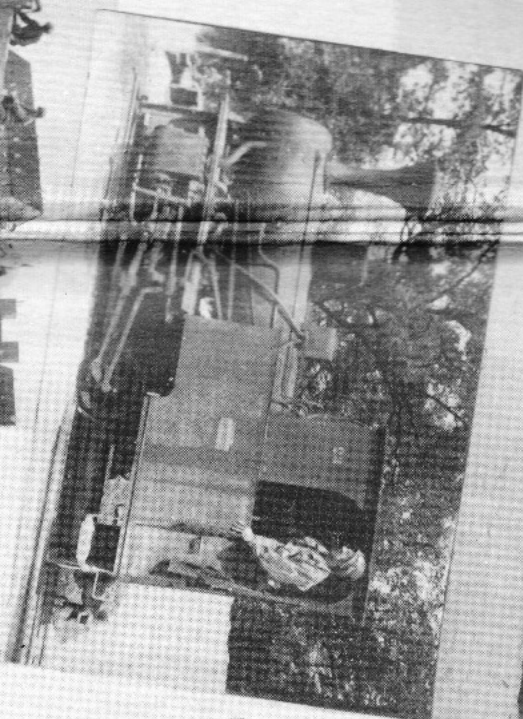
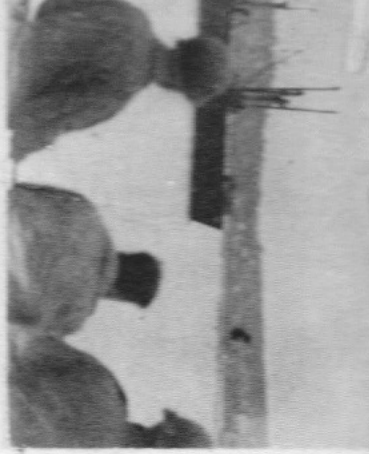
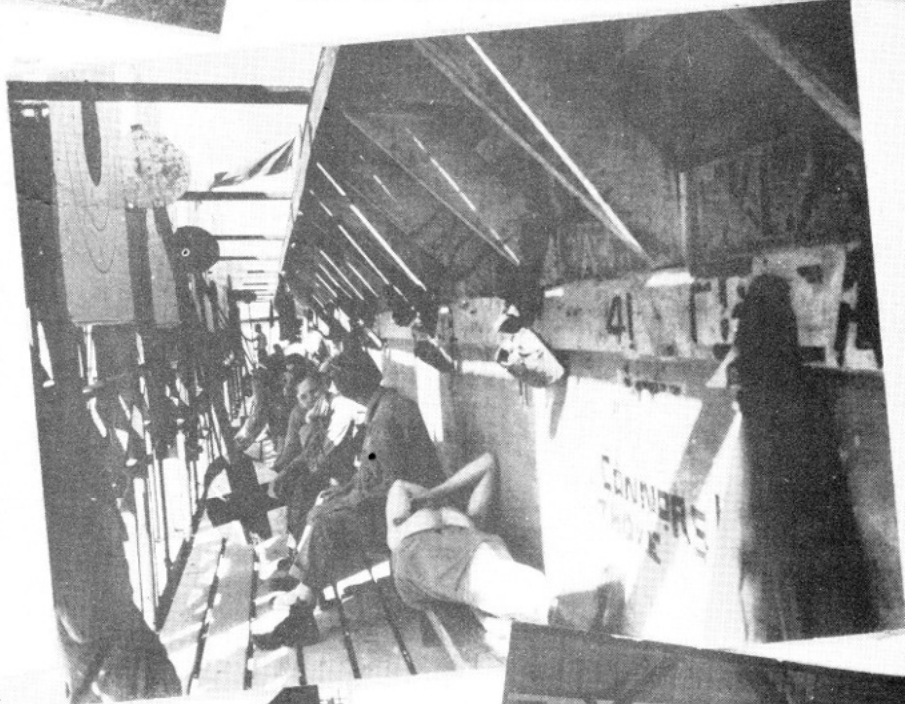
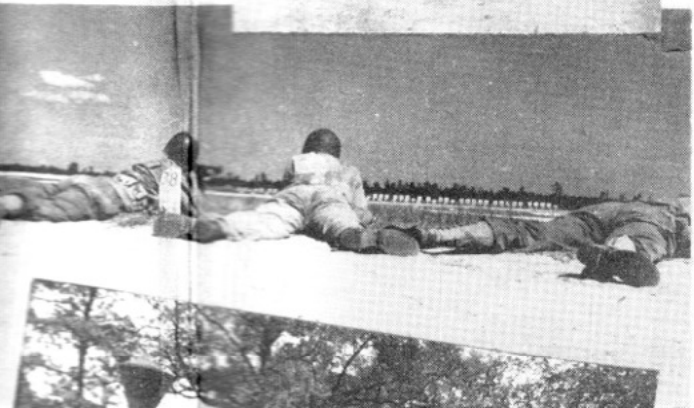


CATFISH





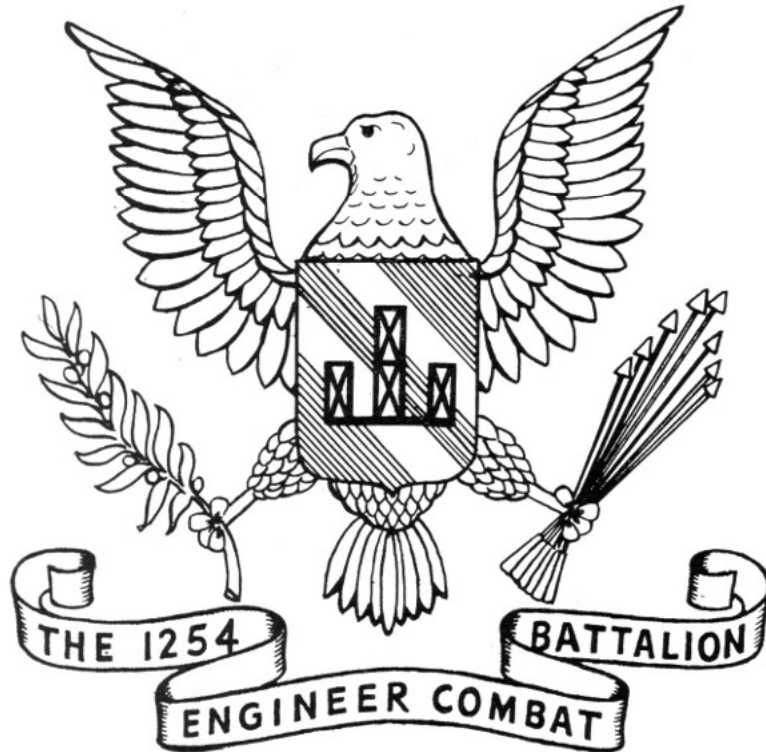




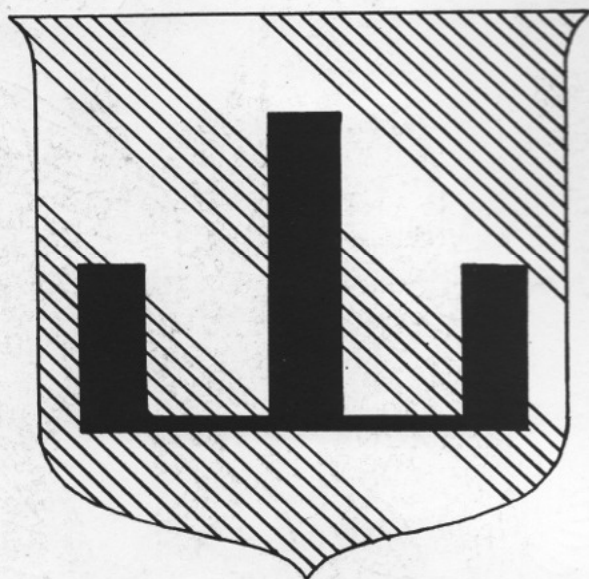
HISTORY

of the

1254TH ENGINEER



COMBAT BATTALION

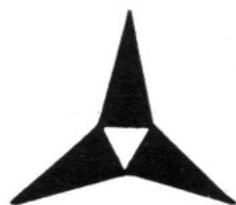


DEDICATION

*To our wives, mothers and sweethearts—who
traveled with us in our hearts over the sea,
over the dusty roads, through the wet and cold,
and deep into the land of the enemy, this book
is dedicated with all our love.*



Insignias



3RD CORPS

Assigned to 3rd. corps 15 December 1943



4th ARMY

Assigned to fourth army 15 December 1943,
Per. GO 33, Hq., Fourth Army DTD 10 Dec. '43.



21ST CORPS

Attached to XXI corps, 15 November 1944 Pel.
LTR. Hq., U. K. Base, Com. 2, Etous.



9TH ARMY

Assigned to ninth U. S. Army, effective 2 March
1945, PEL. LTR., Hq., Twelfth Army Group.



CHANOR BASE SECTION

Assigned to Chanor Base Section Effective 1 July 1945.



LT. COL. VIOLAS BISHOP

It was hot in Louisiana—very hot. A new C. O. couldn't change the weather and in all probability wouldn't change any of the training schedule, so the news that we were to get a new C. O. effected us very little.

Our first view of him was at the theatre between a couple of training films. He didn't say much, in fact not even enough so that we could come to any conclusions. He did tell us that he had spent sixteen months in the South Pacific and that he knew that a well trained outfit had the best chance, but we already knew that so it wasn't news. He also mentioned that we would probably cuss him for his rigidity, but we also expected to do that anyway.

As time passed, however, there was one thing we did learn and that was that it was easier to swear by him instead of about him. In fact there was no reason to swear about him because if there was one thing that could be said it was that he was no "damned brass hat". No matter when or where we were or no matter what the job we always could be sure to see him around. When traveling in convoy we came to expect his jeep to tear past with his massive figure

sitting there with a pipe clenched between his teeth. He was no armchair officer, but one that was always there to do his bit. Many drivers were very surprised to find that he was a willing helper during the process of changing a tire. His hands became dirty too—and in every way he was "our old man".

When the war in the ETO was over we all wanted to go home, but we were not envious when he went before we did. In all of our minds we wished we could go with him. We even said, "Why, that lucky ——"!!! when we heard that he was going to fly back. We knew his work was done. He had brought us a long way and now it was his time to leave. And why not?—sixteen months in the Pacific, and nine months in the ETO. He had served his country well. There were five stars on his ribbons—five campaigns and a brother lying in Normandy. It was his time to leave, but if we ever see him again, no matter if he is a soldier or a civilian, Lt. Col. Bishop will always be "our old man" and it will be an honor to receive that jerky salute as he returns our highball.

Very few of us were engineers and after an average of a year in the army the thought of changing from one branch of the service to another didn't hit too well. We weren't an unwilling lot, but each and every one of us felt that we had been the victim of an army snafu.

There was no one person that we could blame for our new role in a large army, but we could at least bitch about the training schedule and, of course, it was only natural that the name at the bottom of the page should draw our profanity more than any other. Every week when this mimeographed sheet was published it was not uncommon to hear the wailing long and loud. Those of us that had wives with us yelled about the night problems. Others of us orated on the delicate nature of our health and how we were going to drop out of the very next hike. And what was more the name at the bottom of the page was the cause of it all. He was the one that thought up all the seemingly unimportant things that the training schedule called for. He was the one that wanted us to dig, to build bridges, to hike, to send out security, to refrain from smoking on the night problems—in fact, he was responsible for everything that was not right—or so we thought.

The name at the bottom of the page was Major Ralph W. Crump, S-3. He was the one that received all of the blame—and he was the one that took it. He also knew that it was going to be a long process to change some men from A.S.T.P., from artillery and all other branches of the service into engineers. It was not really a pleasant job and he was well aware that some of us did not understand his position and would consider him the cause of all of our grievances.

It took a long time before this feeling changed. England was the turning point in the opinion of the masses. As we drew closer to the war and our role in it was not known to us, we began to see more and more the necessity for the training. We even began to look around our squads and our platoons for the men we felt we could depend on if the "going got rough". We began to want to do the right thing and felt good when Major Crump told us we had done a good job going up Redlynch Hill or building a bridge. All of a sudden it dawned on us that he didn't want us to dig—all he wanted was for us to know how—to be able to do our job if we were called upon. In our minds he became "one of the best damn officers" instead of "that son of a gun with his name at the bottom of a training schedule". He hadn't changed—we had. We became engineers. We began to get faith in ourselves, in our officers and in Major Crump.



MAJOR RALPH W. CRUMP

When we first hit France and the Major became executive officer we were glad. He had trained us and now was being advanced. We knew that he would try to get us "the best deal" possible. As we look back now I think we all agree that it could have been lots rougher and we know that the Major had much to do with the ease of our life while we were operating in an active theatre. The antagonism of the training period had completely disappeared. We never even thought of it—the Major became "our boy".

After it was all over and we had been back to France and then moved to Belgium we heard that Col. Bishop was going back to the states. We were sorry to see him go, but our first thought was, "Who's going to be battalion commander?" and our second one, "I hope it's Major Crump." Our hopes were realized when he was advanced to this important position, and we were glad because we knew there would be no radical change like there might have been if we had received some stranger. It was another "good deal" and we were grateful. We had the man at the head that had won our respect not only because he was an officer, but because of the qualities he possessed that makes a person a "real leader".

BATTALION HISTORY



"CATFISH BUILT THIS?" That mysterious sign on bridges and roads all the way from Maastricht, Holland to Braunsweig, Germany, has aroused more interest than any other unit sign in Lt. General William H. Simpson's Ninth United States Army. Catfish was the code designation of the 1254th Engineer Combat Battalion when it was assigned to the Ninth U. S. Army. That's simple enough, but the mystery lies in that question mark. That punctuation mark has everyone puzzled, including the 1254th. Read it anyway you like, place the emphasis where you may, it's still hard to figure out. On a road in the vicinity of Beckum, Germany are a number of bridges bearing the sign, "CATFISH BUILT THIS?" Another Engineer Combat Battalion which built a bridge on the same road made a literary protest, probably out of professional jealousy, by placing on their bridge a sign reading, "CATFISH DID NOT BUILD THIS!"

To get the background for this mystery, it will be necessary for us to go back to 15 December 1943, when the 1254th Engineer Combat Battalion was activated at Camp Cooke, California, by command of Lt. General William H. Simpson, then CG of the Fourth Army, and the same General who was to lead the 1254th through two campaigns in Germany. On the day previous, 2nd Lt. Charles C. Mitchell entered a building at Wyoming and J Streets, Camp Cooke, where he found one table, one telephone, one scrap of paper, an inch of sand on the floor, and one Captain, Ralph W. Crump. That was the modest beginning of the 1254th Engineer Combat Battalion.

At about 1130 hours the next day, 1st Lt. Stephen P. Hager and 63 enlisted men, most of them newly striped, arrived from the 155th Engineer Combat Battalion at Camp San Luis Obispo, as the cadre. By the end of the week, the other cadre officers had arrived with Lt.

Colonel Philip Y. Browning, a West Pointer and veteran of the North African and Sicilian campaigns, as commanding officer.

Fillers for the new battalion were scheduled to arrive within five days, but new men were assigned in small numbers from other units, with former ASTP men comprising the majority of newcomers.

Pre-basic training was begun until such time as enough new men came in. It was not until 25 April, 1944, that the first large shipment of men arrived with the assignment of 235 men from Ft. Lewis, Washington. Basic training began in earnest and in the fog and sand of Area J, the new men were given the works.

On 27 May, 1944, the battalion boarded a troop train for the move to Camp Livingston, Louisiana, arriving at the new station four days later. The Louisiana heat was on and what a change it was from the typical California weather at Camp Cooke. Training schedules had to be met and the 1254th was literally sweating out the war in the bayous of Louisiana. A short time after the battalion's arrival at Livingston, Lt. Colonel Browning was transferred to Fort Benning, Georgia, where he became head of the Engineering Section of the Infantry School and Lt. Colonel Violas Bishop, fresh from the war in the Pacific, with many tales of the tropical heat and the Japs, became the new Battalion Commander.

All in all, however, Livingston was not too unpleasant when one stops to consider that we were only a few miles from the charming southern metropolis of Alexandria, Louisiana, where you saw fewer civilians per GI than you did at the average Army Camp.

The weather wasn't the only thing that was hot. By the first of September 1944, the 1254th was warming up and on 17 September, the temperature reading at the Pentagon Building revealed that one 1254th Engineers were as hot as the proverbial little red wagon and, as the War Department cryptically put it, were scheduled for "movement by water".

On _____ 1944 the battalion was alerted for overseas movement and there was a mad rush getting rid of 4-F's, completing overseas training requirements, drawing new clothing and equipment and packing and crating equipment.

It was on 13 October, 1944, Friday the 13th, not exactly a favorable omen, but the 1254th

again boarded a train, this time for Camp Kilmer, N. J., the final step before sailing for overseas. At Kilmer there were more inspections, clothing checks, lectures, films, practice at abandoning ship and last, but not least, that rigid physical examination. This physical was strictly a "Cough, you're in" deal and they didn't even give the boys a chance to explain their numerous symptoms.

With a band at the docks to serenade them, 603 enlisted men and 30 officers, on 21 October, 1944, boarded His Majesty's (and he's welcome to it) Transport Tamaroa for the Atlantic crossing. To those who had visions of riding the Queen Mary, the Tamaroa looked like a floating derelict, but, in the interests of maintaining good relations with our Brittanic allies, we won't go into that. At 1000 hours, the following day, the Tamaroa steamed out of New York Harbor to join a sizable convoy. A lot of us were "hurtin'" as we took a last look at the Statue of Liberty. While we had good weather and the sea wasn't too rough, still there were numerous cases of sea-sickness and there is still some question as to whether the cause for the sea-sickness was the acrobatics of the Tamaroa or the wonderful cooking. At any rate, the troops were unanimous in agreeing that boiled liver is anything but appetizing when served as a breakfast dish aboard a rolling vessel.

After an otherwise uneventful crossing, we debarked at Avonmouth, England on 3 November, 1944 and proceeded, almost immediately, by train for the new location, Wincanton, Somerset, England.

Ah! Dear Old Wincanton. According to a travel book modestly entitled, "Smiling Somerset", the town of Wincanton is described thusly: "Situated at the head of the lovely Blackmoor Vale, this old market town is not without its



attractions. . . . It is of interest to note that Rhode Island, U.S.A. was colonized by settlers of Wincanton." Captain Roderick M. Dunlop, who hails from that tiny state, hasn't been quite the same since he was informed of that historical fact. The book also makes another statement, "Photographers generally like to snap the courtyard of the Greyhound Hotel". That is a statement that will be hotly debated to those EM who lived in the back of the Greyhound. "A" and "B" Companies were stationed at nearby Camp Westhill, while "C" Company was situated at Redlynch on the estate of Lady Suffolk.

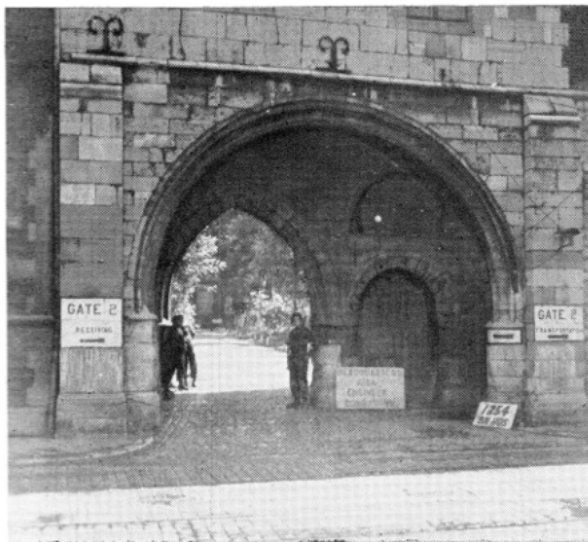
On 23 February 1945, the battalion left its billets, remained overnight at Piddlehinton, boarded LST's and LCI's at the port of Weymouth and landed on the continent on the 26th. Within a few minutes, a convoy was formed and the battalion proceeded to Camp Twenty Grand, France, where it remained until March 6th for processing prior to entry into the Combat Zone.

After a 450 mile motor march, the entire unit arrived at Maastricht, Holland on 7 March, 1945. "C" Company was immediately sent to Germany near the large town of Heinsburg, to mark minefields and road net. H and S, "A" and "B" Companies remained in Maastricht, taking over an Engineer Dump and operating water points inside Germany.

The once sacred soil of the Third Reich was entered by the 1254th on 31 March, 1945 when the move to Kaldenkirchen was made. Six days later orders came to move to Beckum, Germany, and on 6th April, the battalion made an all night drive in blackout through a narrow corridor of the Ruhr Pocket, arriving at the destination the following morning.

At Beckum, the battalion was attached to XIX Corp (Task Force TWADDLE) and operated in direct support of two divisions, the 8th





Armored and the 95th Infantry. The mission of Task Force TWADDLE was to prevent the escape of enemy forces through the gap existing between its positions and the remainder of XVI Corps.

On 9 April 1945, the 1254th was attached to XVI Corps to do road maintenance, and constructed Bailey Bridges on the Autobahn, continuing direct support of the 95th Infantry and 8th Armored Divisions. On 10 April, the Battalion CP was moved to Altenbogge, Germany, with the companies continuing their work.

For a matter of record, the encirclement of the rich industrial area of the Ruhr was completed on 1 April 1945, when the First and Ninth U. S. Armies met at Lippstadt, Germany. This strategic move, planned by General Eisenhower himself, is regarded as the greatest double envelopment in military history and the number of prisoners taken, 317,000 was greater than at Stalingrad.

The next move for the entire battalion was made on 16 April, 1945 when a move was made to Hildersheim, Germany. Returning to assignment as Ninth Army Engineers, the battalion did such work as building and maintaining roads, rehabilitation of an airfield, reconnaissance work and guarding captured factories and demolition stores. On May 4, H and S, "B" and "C" Companies moved to a factory at Marienrode, a few miles from Hildersheim. "A" Company remained billeted in the city itself.

The 1254th Engineer Combat Battalion left Germany on 27 May 1945, on a week-end as usual, and arrived at Ste Mere Eglise, France to do engineer work for Normandy Base Section. A week later the Battalion CP was moved to Coutainville, France to continue this work.

During the time spent in France before moving to Belgium, the principal work of the bat-

talion was the removal of a pipe line. The 70th Engineer Light Ponton Company was also attached to us and worked with us on this job. Due to the great amount of territory that the line covered it was necessary that the companies be widely separated. While the Battalion CP, H and S Company, and part of "C" remained in Coutainville, "A" Company was located at Bagnoles, and "B" Company was at Chartre.

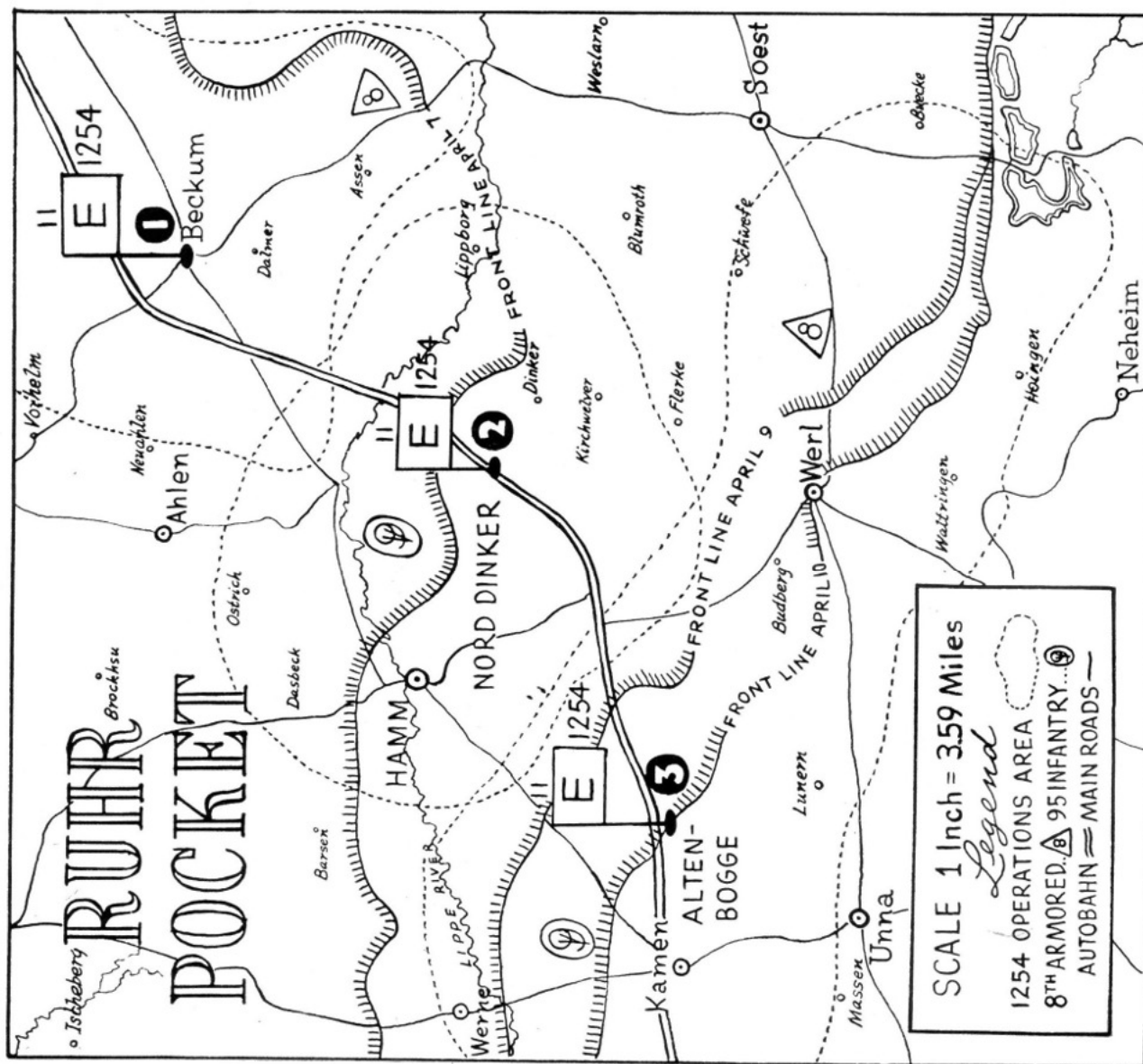
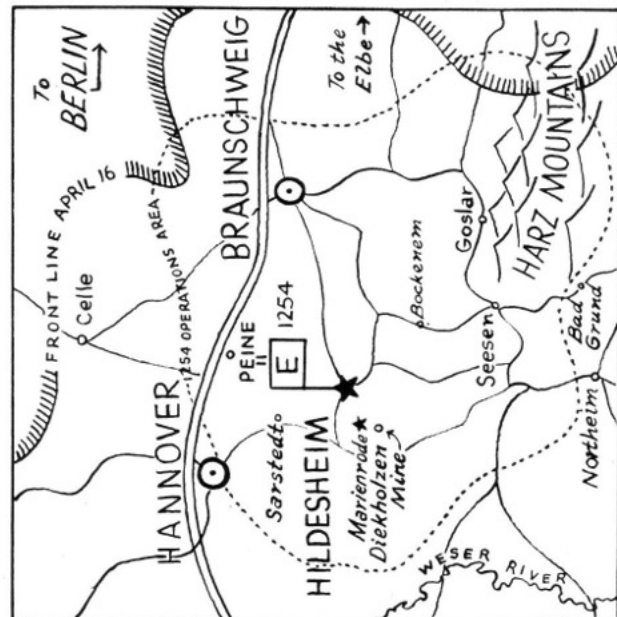
After moving to Belgium the last part of July, the Battalion was located at Henri Chapelle, a short distance from Liege and Verviers, Belgium. Here we were assigned to the Chanor Base Section and our work consisted of operating a lumber re-consignment depot.

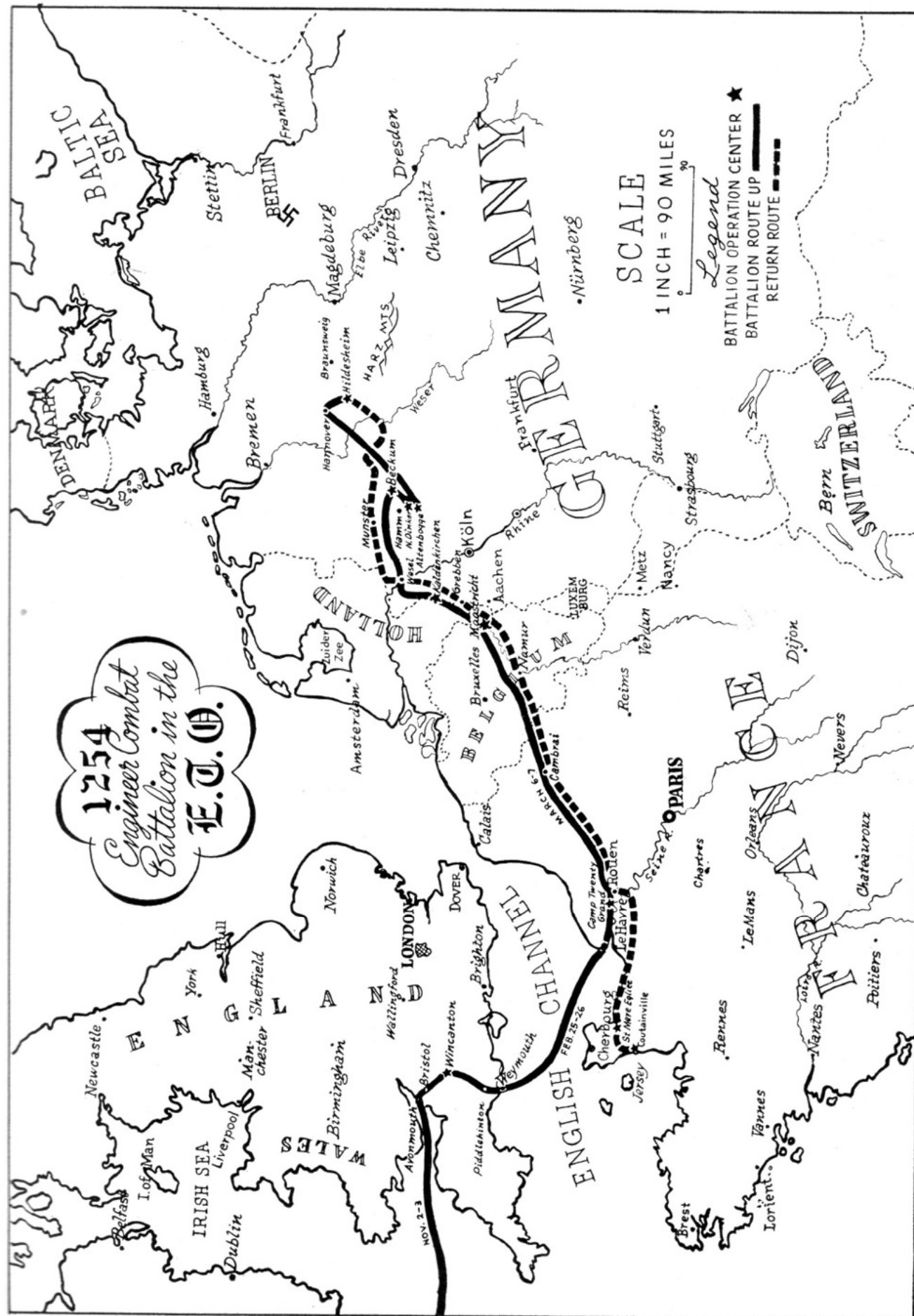
Shortly after this the Battalion was separated again with the Battalion CP and H and S Company moving to Liege and then to Tongres, Belgium. It was while the Battalion CP was in Tongres that a record was set when it comes to the dispersal of troops inasmuch as each company was operating in a different European country. H and S was in Belgium, "A" Company was in Holland, "B" was in Germany, and "C" was in France. At the same time we had men on furlough in England, Scotland, and Ireland. During this period the work consisted of general engineering jobs for the Chanor Base Section.

The fall of 1945 consisted of losing most of the men and trying to do engineer jobs all over Belgium. Finally all left the battalion but Capt. David A. Wallace and on Dec. 8, 1945 he turned in the last morning report of the 1254th. So all that's left of "Catfish" is a 4'x8' box of records with the 38th Engr. G.S. Regmt. in Belgium.

That is the story of the 1254th and its work in the ETO. We'll have to admit that "CATFISH BUILT THIS?" will probably remain one of the unsolved mysteries of World War II.





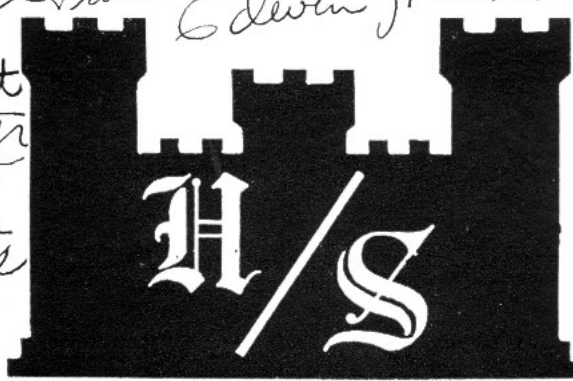


H/S

Thurston, John T. John S. Abner
Anna John Hubman John Hamilton
John W. Hamilton
Elizabeth
Sarah F. Michelson
Mary Ann
Margaret
Eugene W. Mursell

Frederick
Carlton D. Frost
Robert J. Schuyler
Alfred W. Mide
John Martin
Frank Columbus
Richard Smith
Wilbert Schmidt
Edward C. Ripa
Eugene W. Mursell

John C. Arthur, M. Camara, Charles Frank, J. De Renzi
 Allen, George, B. Bueke, John P. Craig
 Frank Wiebe, Sand, Basore, Russell, Donald, H. M. McCormick
 William R. Battiere, Clyde E. Olson, Morris R. Callstrom
 Robert, James, Woods, Samuel, Bringhurst, Gordon, Matthews, John A. Gibbs
 David E. Eddinger, Alden, D. Tellerson, John R. Gulleranson
 Ernest R. Talbot, David, George E. Gashue, Frank S. Hansen
 Evan H. Rodkinson, Charles, Ingram, Gordon, Harry, Hoffman
 John P. Kelly, Hollow, William, Robert H. Hollenbeck, Kendall
 Anthony, Earl B. Kenyon, Frank, Boone, Morris M. Herod
 Anthony M. Jannucci, Edwin J. Weber, Sam J. Hitzig
 Donald R. Hogg, Frank E. Feranna, Fred Tolbert Jr.
 James, E. Witt, Arlin B. Rose
 Sidney W. Horer, Robert L. Schauer
 Wallace, W. O'Connor, Alfred Widell
 Elbert Johnson, John Martin
 H. J. Sparks, Frank Palumbo
 Jack Newhouse, Frank, Richard, Bushy
 Floyd Hamilton, John L. Spence, Wilbert Schmidt
 Barney Williams, John Kuhlman, Edward A. Liparula
 Thomas E. Carr, Vernon, John W. Hamilton, Robert F. Michelson
 Robert, Charles, Joint, William, Sam, J. Aboud
 Charles, Russell, Marriage, Eugene W. Murrat
 Stanley C. Primus, Charles R. McHarry, Stanley J. Pozorski
 Charles O. Samek Jr., Louis J. Pounier, Ernest W. Rotina
 Joseph, John H. Schultz, Jr., Aloys, Eugene, S. Tomczyk
 Gad, Sack, E. Borovitz, William, Casimir, Lester C. Silva
 Oring S. Nelson, James E. Smith, S. Whittaker
 Clair G. Temple, Robert D. Wimmerauer, Carlton, James E. Vaughan
 Francis W. Todd, Howard, S. Walbe, Cedric E. Tarr
 A. V. S.





H. J. Sparks, M. R. Rizzo, S/Sgt. Moore
 T. E. Carr, S. J. Hitzig, E. W. Rothert, R. H. Hollenbeck, F. S. Feranna, S. Poznoski
 F. P. White, -----, C. L. Whittaker, W. R. Morris, W. R. Bottieri



CAPT. MICHAEL R. RIZZO

HEADQUARTERS and SERVICE COMPANY

HEADQUARTERS and SERVICE COMPANY

Headquarters and Service Company is the Housekeeping Department of the Battalion and its enlisted personnel operate the Staff Sections, S-1, S-2, S-3, S-4, ADE and Maintenance. All of the men in the Company, with the exception of those in Company Headquarters, work under the direct supervision of their Section Leaders and are, for all practical purposes, only in H/S Co. for rations, quarters and administration. The emphasis should be placed on the Service and not upon the Headquarters. Sections such as supply, administration and maintenance coordinate Battalion services for the three line companies, performing duties which each company would be too busy for during tactical operations. This company is a centralized agency of specialists who carry out the everyday operating functions of the Battalion and act as liaison with higher headquarters, thus relieving the "line" companies for field operations, such as bridge building and road-construction.

In the field the primary function of the H/S Commanding Officer is Headquarters Commandant and he is charged with the responsibility of safeguarding the Battalion CP. Headquarters Section consists of the Orderly Room, Company Supply, and Mess Personnel.

Since activation of the Company on December 15, 1943, CAPTAIN MICHAEL R. RIZZO has been Commanding Officer of Headquarters and Service Company. When Captain RIZZO advanced to the position of Battalion Assistant Division Engineer, on August 6, 1945, First Lieutenant HORACE B. LATHROP assumed command. Robert L. Stephens was First Sergeant from activation date until 29 June 1944 when he left as part of a cadre. Sergeant Stephens was succeeded by First Sergeant William R. Belyea. In September 1944, Sergeant Belyea was transferred and his place was filled by Jack D. Chambers, who held this position until May 1945, when he and Master Sergeant Harold J. Sparks, then Battalion Special Service NCO, exchanged places.

The Company began its existence on the wind-swept shores of the Pacific at Camp Cooke, California. Most of the Company took Engineer Basic Training there within sight of the ocean. Camp Cooke will be remembered for night-hikes and Barracks discipline and week-ends in Los Angeles and Santa Barbara. On May 28th the Company moved with the rest of the Battalion by train across the Southwestern States to Camp Livingston, Louisiana (exactly one year later

to the day, the Company made a similar long trek across western Europe from Hildesheim, Germany to Coutainville, France by truck convey).

At Camp Livingston basic continued and a major turn-over in the Company's Personnel came when the cadre left and replacements came in. Barracks discipline was still the order of the day, and it was welcome news when the Battalion was alerted and began a frantic two weeks of packing equipment for overseas shipment. After another train ride, across the Southeastern States and a six day stay at POE Camp Kilmer, New Jersey; the company embarked for a memorable ride on the HMT TAMAROA. This ride will be particularly remembered for crap games (in which a character for H & S called "Lucky" almost caused the Battalion to go bankrupt), and sleepless nights in the hold. But the Battalion Special Service worked in conjunction with our sister Battalion, the 1253rd, to provide the daily Port Hole News (a newspaper written by the men and for the men), boxing, musical shows, cinema, and Sunday Church Services.

Upon arrival in England November 1st, 1944, H & S set itself up in the Greyhound Hotel (air conditioned) and downtown offices of Wincanton, England—a little town in Southern England near Salisbury. During the four winter months spent there, both EM and Officers made many friends among the English and the Saturday night dances in Deanseley Hall with music by the Battalion's own orchestra became an accepted institution in the town.

February 25, 1945, the Company loaded its equipment aboard an LST while part of its personnel boarded an LCI for the trip across the choppy English Channel to Le Havre. After a short stay at Camp Twenty Grand near Rouen, France, we jumped across Belgium and France to Maastricht, Holland, fifty miles behind the front lines. At Maastricht, the Company had one of its "good deals". The Company and the Battalion CP were set up in a luxurious Chateau with practically all of the comforts of home (that is if 15 people sleep in one room at your house) and we even had Dutch maids to clean-up the place. The Dutch Government provided kitchen helpers and we saw that rare day when someone volunteered for K. P. A Dutch boy of 18, whom we called "Johnnie", had been coming to solicit laundry business for his mother and was so attracted by the Army

life of a permanent K. P. that he "joined up" and stayed with us when we went into the Ruhr Valley in Germany. His marvelous aptitude with the Accordion made him a popular mascot of the Company, and brought many a nostalgic thought of home when he played some popular requests such as "I'll Walk Alone".

Beckum, Nord-Dinker, Altenbogge, Hildesheim are names which will not soon be forgotten by members of this company. We always managed to find a temporary set-up we could call "home". We lived in many nice German houses including the pretentious homes of some wealthy Nazis in Hildersheim. But the highlight was undoubtedly the H & S "occupation" of the Trillke-Werke Factory at Marienrode, Germany. It was a recently built electrical equipment factory, very modern in every respect with modern lighting and plumbing in every room, a public address system, complete motor pool and garage facilities, a motion picture projector in a large auditorium, and many other advantages (among which some would include the presence of several thousand displaced Russians and Poles under Battalion supervision). It later became a SHAEF target and was sought after by a general as a site for his Division Headquarters, but was retained by our Battalion Headquarters until we left for Ste Mere l'Eglise, France. On 26th May, 1945, the first American Flag, hand-made by local German civilians under American supervision, was raised over this "liberated" German factory.

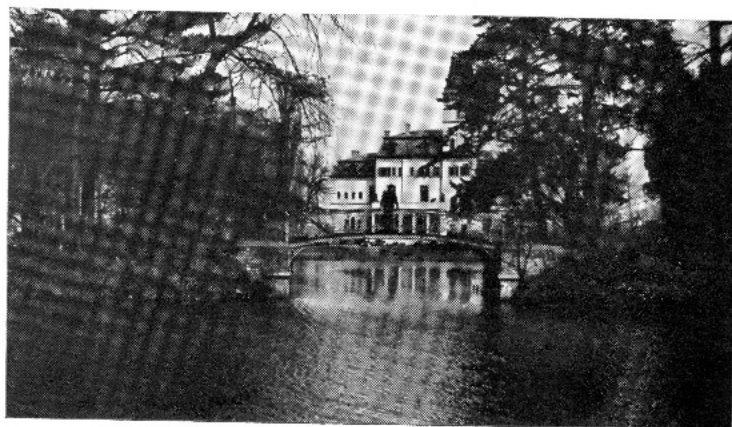
On May 26th, H & S Company left Germany for Ste Mere l'Eglise, France. After a few days in a tent city (pup tents), it was decided that better quarters could be found. Four reconnaissance parties were sent out to comb the

Normandy Peninsula and as a result, H & S moved into the Hotel De l'Plage (Beach Hotel) in the little seaside resort town of Coutainville, France. Here we had quarters overlooking the sea and a Casino Dance Hall where our orchestra played Wednesday and Saturday nights. As in Wincanton, the American "good will" policy won the hearts of many mademoiselles so that when eight weeks later, orders came to move to Belgium, many broken hearts were left behind.

In Belgium H & S took quarters in a former Belgian Army Barracks on the outskirts of Henri Chapelle. On the cement wall of the Guard House in this camp there are three clusters of chipped indentations where three German spies met their death at the hands of an American firing squad during the Ardennes break-through in the winter of 1944-45.

On August 14th, H & S and Battalion Headquarters took up residence in a large former Belgian Hospital in Liege. The hospital is situated on a high hill affording a panorama view of the city. The chief difficulty, however, is the effort necessary to get back up the hill after once descending to enjoy the night life of Liege.

On Sept. 5, 1945 Battalion Headquarters and H and S Company moved to the city of Tongres, Belgium, a few miles north of Liege. Here they took up residence in another former hospital where the facilities were adequate and very clean. Shortly after moving forty-two low point men were transferred to the 347 Engineer General Service Regiment which was slated for occupation duty. The rest of us kept busy counting our points on our fingers and wondered when the H.M.T. Tamaroa was again going to steam into port and take us back toward the Statue of Liberty.





A. M. Iannucci, C. C. Mitchell, M. R. Callstrom,
S. Basone, L. E. Silva

The big three of the S-1 Section are 1st Lt. Charles C. Mitchell of Oklahoma and late of the 13th Armored Division; M/Sgt. Morris R. (Brains) Callstrom from the waste lands of Minnesota; and the Contra Costa County California Kid, Tec 5 Lester E. Silva. This triumvirate came to Camp Cooke, California, on cadre, officiated at the birth of the 1254th and have since nursed the organization along, carrying on the administrative functions of the battalion.

S-1 is not a glamorous section—heroes aren't made in S-1 and the work must necessarily follow a certain routine whether in the United States or in the Ruhr pocket. Special Orders, General Orders, Court Mar-



LT. CHARLES C. MITCHELL

S-1 SECTION

tial Orders must be issued. Every piece of "poop" that comes to the battalion must pass through the able hands of Sgt. Major Callstrom and they haven't spared the paper in this war. The Section must be organized so that it can move on short notice and "there is no rear echelon in the 1254th".

The Section was almost annihilated before we got into combat. On the trip from Camp Twenty Grand to Maastricht, a Limey lorry crowded their vehicle H-12 off the road and a shake-up resulted. At least that's S-1's version of the alleged accident.

The crossing of the Rhine was held up by S-1 for a few minutes. It all goes back to Wincanton where a lovely two-wheeled narrow gauge

trailer was built. Just whose brain child that was, is not for us to say, but it was a good idea until we got to that tread-way ponton bridge crossing the Rhine at Wessel, when something went kaput. It seems that the trailer wheels weren't quite wide enough to fit the treads. Troops going to the front were being held up, the war was being delayed so Lt. Mitchell gave orders to leave the dad-blasted trailer there. But that's not the end of the story. A few weeks later, while driving down the Autobahn, Sgts. Callstrom, Tolvert, Choronzak, and Karpan passed the convoy of an MP Company. They saw a familiar sight—a narrow gauge trailer, still marked H-12. Callstrom screamed, "I thought I'd seen the last of that blankety-blank trailer."

The latest addition to the S-1 Section is Pfc. Arnold Smerilson of Philadelphia who succeeded Tec 5 Edwin J. Weber when he left the section last December to become a Radio Operator for Reconnaissance. The monotony of S-1 is often relieved by Smerilson's agonizing screams as Brains Callstrom applies the lash, while an occasional whimper is heard from Silva as he tries to free himself of the S-1 Ball and Chain.

But, regardless of where the S-1 Office is located, one condition always prevails. It is still the clearing house for all battalion arguments and serves as an Officer's Lounge. Scarcely an hour passes but what someone comes in wanting to know what the poop is on that, or what AR covers this, or why isn't such and such filed under two ten point one. When the going gets too tough, Lt. Mitchell usually makes a strategic withdrawal by "taking off like a scalded bird dog" as he puts it.

To the individual man, the most important function of S-1 is the Message Center and Mail Room. This department is under the capable direction of Tec 5 Anthony M. Iannucci and his able assistant Tec 5 Sando Basone. Basone also known by such names as "The Little Flower" "I'll Bet 500 Dollars", the "Beer Barrel" following the big cigar and the "Walking Lister Bag". Iannucci, in addition to being the best clarinet player in the band pinch hits as a Chaplain, punching the cards of those who were shut out at Mail Call.

Back in the states, the mail run was merely a short drive to the Post Office, but it gets to be

quite a job overseas. The mail clerks made many a cold trip over the cow paths of England making the thirty-six mile run from Wincanton to Blandford. Basone didn't mind driving on the left side of the road on snow and ice, but when the wind suddenly shifted, blowing tobacco juice back into his face, he "blew his top".

On the continent it was worse—constant moving, changing APO's or, rather looking for new APO's involved a lot of work, but mail had top priority. The longest trip for mail was made by Iannucci and Don McCormick when they drove from Nord-Dinker, Germany to Maastricht, Holland, a 500 mile round trip. On one occasion these two men got lost, almost driving into Dortmund, Germany before it was taken. Fortunately a blown bridge stopped them and upon inquiry they learned that they were heading into the enemy lines.

For some unknown reason, outgoing mail is consistently heavier than incoming mail. Men of this battalion have purchased hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of Money Orders, the record for one day being over \$5,000.00. Packages took a lot of stamps and a record was set at the APO at Braunscheig when Iannucci bought \$123.00 worth of stamps for packages being sent that day. Those packages we sent home caused many a headache for the battalion mail clerks, what with hauling them, making change and sweating out that desperately long line at the Post Office. It seems that the 1254th wasn't the only outfit that was mailing souvenirs home and our mail clerks missed many meals because they had to wait so long in line to get our packages mailed. The last week we were in Germany, the Battalion Mail Room sent out more than 500 packages.

If you think you haven't been getting your share of the mail, it isn't because the mail hasn't been coming in recently. At the Carentan, France, APO the 1254th set a record for incoming mail—53 bags of parcel post and eleven pouches of first class mail.

Let the Mail Clerk know you appreciate his efforts. He wants to see you get mail and the bigger the haul, the better he likes it. The mail must go through and when Basone gets at the throttle of "The Fast Mail", the United States government disclaims all responsibility for the safety of anyone on the roads or for the surrounding populace.





R. G. Wimmennauer, A. Benfield, E. Oesterreich, F. W. Laird
F. J. Karpan, W. M. Choronzak, H. S. Swincki, F. Tolbert, Jr.

PERSONNEL SECTION

More stuff on clerks. Sure, those clerks have a soft deal. All those pencil pushers do is sit on their bird dogs all day long and pound a typewriter. So they make a payroll—that only takes a few hours and they sit around the rest of the month. And they've got their nerve to ask for a vehicle to convert money or submit a payroll when all they're interested in is a chance to do some looting. We've heard that hundreds of times and maybe you believe it.

But there's another side to the question, and if you think they're living the life of Reilly—well you're entitled to your opinion. That First Sergeant (you know, the one with the hen-house tendencies) passes the buck to the clerk. "Here, Corporal, type this up." Of course he doesn't give you any information to work from and gives you credit for being a mind reader or something. Or someone else hands you a ream of typing to do, nine times out of ten something technical, of which you have no knowledge, the copy is scrawled or scribbled with half of misspelled or abbreviated beyond recognition. So—the clerk types it up, makes the necessary corrections, grammatical or otherwise, and proudly presents

it to the author, seeking only a few brown points as a reward. "Now Corporal, that's just fine, except for one thing. I forgot to tell you I wanted that in 12 copies and you made only 11."

Top kicks and brass aren't the only hard time givers. Company Clerk Joe Blowe knocks off work, maybe he's eating chow, or having a quick beer, or snowing his favorite gal friend, trying to forget AR's and circulars. What happens? Bill Smith dashes up, "Say Corporal, how's come my second wife's mother-in-law isn't getting her allotment? When do we get paid?" So the clerk patiently explains why, under the provisions of paragraph umpety-ump of AR this and that, Bill Smith is not entitled to said allotment.

Don't get us wrong. Your Company Clerk doesn't mind answering your questions. Every clerk, in this battalion at least, is interested in the welfare of the men of his outfit. He'll do anything to see to it that you get what is coming to you—in the way of pay or allotments. He'll write letters for you until he is blue in the face and will hound you incessantly until you sign

the payroll. He is working for you.

The Personnel Section of this battalion is responsible for the maintenance of the most important records in the Army.

First, the Morning Report, the historic record of the Army and it may prove to be the deciding factor in any claim you might possibly have against the government at some time.

The second important record is the Service Record, that little booklet that contains the complete story of your Army career. It is so important that it eventually will be placed on permanent file and a hundred years from now it may be necessary to refer to your Service Record. Hence, every entry in it must be absolutely accurate and made by proper authority.

The other important record is the qualification card, WD AGO Form 20. From that yellow card with holes along the edges, you are classified and assigned.

What else does Personnel do? Payrolls, bond allotments, insurance, family allotments, correspondence, posting AR's and Circulars, rosters and a hundred other things not to mention typing for other sections and those darned SOI's for the Communications Section.

Regardless where we are located, the paper work must follow a certain routine. Every higher headquarters has a different way of doing things so whenever we change headquarters (which is plenty often) the method of doing things must be changed accordingly.

The clerks will never forget those hectic days after we were alerted. POM this and POM that! IG's were going through the records with a fine tooth comb, gotta get those entries, hell yes we work tonight, the IG at the POE will do some fancy reaming if everything isn't absolutely right. So we got to the POE and submitted our records. You think the POE physicals were a laugh—well the inspection of records wasn't any different. Poor old Corporal Benfield moaned, "Here I stay up nights sweating over those records while the little woman is pining away in Alexandria. I should have stood in bed."

Did you see your clerk struggling up the gangplank carrying all of his full field equipment and a chest full of records plus a typewriter? Oh, well, once we get overseas, there



WOJG HENRY S. SWINCKI

won't be any paper work and we'll ride the gravy train. That was another one of those unfunny jokes. The men still have to be paid—if you can find a finance office. Money is turned in to be converted, money to be sent home, bonds to be purchased. Someone changes his allotment, the form doesn't get to the right place in time so his pay is screwed up. The guy gets mad at the clerk, a nasty letter comes from the ODB . . . reply by endorsement and Mr. Swincki whispers sweetly, "This stuff has got to come to a quick focus."

There were lighter moments such as the time at Wincanton when Colonel Arrowsmith of the XXI Corps, Colonel Elliget of Group and some other brass were inspecting. They wanted to see the Form 20's, but Karpan was gone. He was at White's buying tarts and rolls for the section. Patrols were sent out to get him to park the rolls somewhere, but Karpan is pretty good at sneaking through the back alleys. Much to the embarrassment of all concerned, he walked in carrying the groceries, very calmly put them down and took care of the gentlemen. We still can't understand why someone didn't get chewed out about that deal.

On the continent it was a series of moves, trying to run an office from the back end of a 2½ ton truck.

Ah, V-E Day, now we can take it easy. Do we? No . . . got to figure up the points. Let's see, that's simple, 12 points per kid, 5 points per battle star, 2 points for every month overseas. Oh, oh, this joker was "up the road" for 9 months and 14 days. Some fun! The paper war still goes on.

So you're not convinced yet. Well we've got one more argument. The Stars and Stripes says that 405 Clerks are essential and what the Stars and Stripes says is good enough for us. Unfortunately essentials are still worth 66 bucks a month.

The Personnel Section consists of a Personnel Officer, WOJG Henry S. Swincki; a Personnel Sergeant, T/Sgt. Fred Tolbert; a Classification Specialist, Sgt. Frank J. Karpan, a Records Clerk, Tec 5 David Eddinger, plus four company clerks, Corporals Elmer Oesterreich, B; Frank Laird, C; Bob Wimmenauer, H and S; and a character from North Hollywood,

California Arthur (Rollo) Benfield, representing A Company.

Quite a number of changes have taken place in the Section. Ben Evans left Personnel to become H and S Company Supply Sergeant. It was with genuine regret that we parted company with T/Sgt. William M. Choronzak of Chicago, when he left us in May 1945 to work for the Ninth Army Military Government. Chuck-Chuck, as he was known, came to us in July 1944 from a Portable Pro Hospital, at least that was his story. Previously he had been in what he insisted was an Underground Barrage Balloon Battalion. Bill had a wonderful sense of humor and acquired at least 50 nicknames. His Chicago accent was something worth hearing and despite our combined efforts to give him a hard time, we couldn't make him unhappy.

Sgt. Choronzak's place as Records Clerk was taken by Tec 5 Eddinger, formerly of "B" Company. Dave, a North Carolinian, is quite busy fighting two wars, this one and the Civil War. He has acquired such names as Deacon and Scarlet O'Hara, but his chief troubles come from those damn Yankee typewriters which insist on spelling hep with an "I".

Fred Tolbert, who has been up on the road, has as his favorite pin-up . . . not a girl, but a famous Scotty dog, namely Fala. He generally responds to the name Doc.

Rollo Benfield, who came with Sgt. Tolbert on cadre from the 155th Engineers, spends 97% of his working (?) time telling how they used to do it in the old outfit. His free time is spent discussing his favorite hobby and the merits of Hollywood. These discussions are generally with Mac McCormick who drives the Personnel-Communications Sections 2½ ton truck and also hails from Hollywood.

"B" Company's clerk, Elmer Oesterreich is called, because of his advanced years, "Popsy", but is also known as "Horizontal" because that is the position in which he is usually found.

Corporal Frank Laird of Opportunity (get that name?) Washington, clerk for Charlie Company, specializes in making crystal radio sets and is the Rube Goldberg of the section. Bob Wimmenauer, liaison man for H and S Company, has achieved the dubious distinction of being the only man whose name, though spelled with two M's, is consistently mispronounced Winnemauer. He, like Oesterreich, is definitely opposed to any form of physical exertion and you will never find him standing if a sack is anywhere in the vicinity.

Frank Karpan, an Uncultured Iowa peasant, known also as Dr. Karpanovich, the Mad Russian, and Mr. Swincki (Pay Day and Radar) have been so busy keeping their noses to the grindstone (or somewhere) that they haven't earned many nicknames.



On the Road to Berlin



RUHR POCKET HERO

It goes without saying that anyone who fought through the Battle of the Ruhr Pocket, is a hero, but in every campaign the work of some man is outstanding and is eventually recognized. The 1254th so far has selected only one man as an example of the "never say die" spirit shown by his unit in its contribution to the remarkable success of Task Force Twaddle. That man is from "A" Company and he was recommended for the Bronze Nose Award. The citation read as follows:

CITATION

Corporal Arthur Benfield (Army Serial Number 39570700), Corps of Engineers, United States Army, for meritorious service in connection with military operations from 7 April 1945 to 22 May 1945. Corporal Benfield, working under adverse conditions, exhibited superior efficiency in operating an LCS (L. C. Smith typewriter) and mastered the nomenclature and operation of a 46 key German typewriter without dropping a period, at same time carrying out his assigned duties as a Company Clerk with diligence and exceptional devotion to duty. On the night of 10 April 1945 in the village of Altenbogge, Germany, Corporal Benfield, de-

spite heavy overhead artillery fire (American), and extreme proximity of enemy patrols, guarded the Battalion CP against all enemies. At the village of Nord-Dinker, Germany, Corporal Benfield slept with one eye open and one ear cocked to hear the cackling of nearby hens, thereby obtaining an adequate supply of fresh eggs for his comrades in arms, despite ferocious competition from civilian German women. In addition to performing all these duties, Corporal Benfield gave generously of his skill, repairing watches, flat irons and engraving cigarette lighters. Corporal Benfield's civilian experience as a jeweler was utilized to appraise the value of "liberated" German silverware and jewelry, and as a result many men of his organization were saved the necessity of carrying worthless impediments. His unceasing efforts to obtain Good Conduct Medals and Battle Stars for the men of his company earned for him the respect and admiration of the Officers and men of the 1254th Engineer Combat Battalion, as well as reflecting great credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of the United States. Entered military service from the colonial possession of California.

1st Lt., CE Adjutant.



G. E. Witt, C. E. Olson, W. C. Ingram, W. E. Huggins, W. W. Mills
P. K. Widell, E. H. Hodkinson, C. F. Diegnan

Line is out to Co. "A". Let's go! The wire crew Johnson looks for his gloves. He is told to stop his singing. The boys do enjoy his singing, but it's raining and they must say something. All the powerful G. I. trucks are waiting to rush the wire Patrol on their job. The rush is temporarily held up until the crew finds one to use. While this takes place, the electrical wizard has quietly assembled the necessary equipment such as; W110, W 71, TE33, EE8A, RL31B, etc. He has other names such as Ingie or Sgt. His Christian name is Ingram, but he's the backbone of the radio section keeping all equipment in top shape. This includes the red paint for identification which also marks the hands.

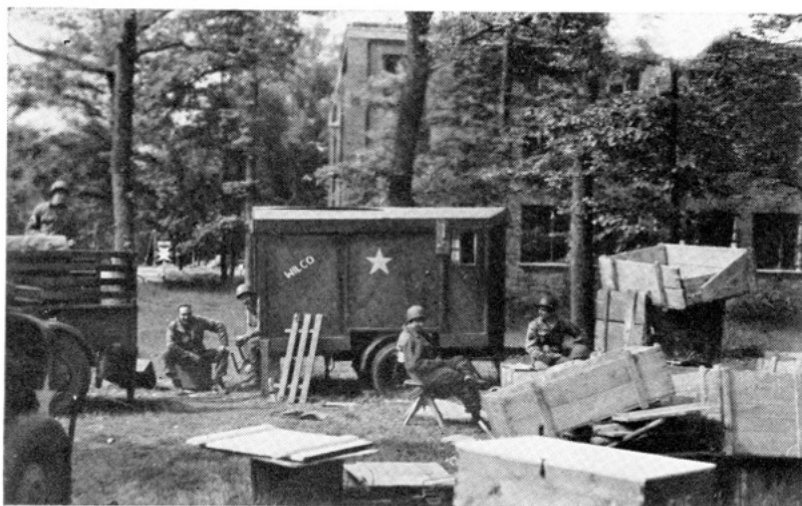


LT. GEORGE R. McDONALD

COMMUNICATION SECTION

Mills and Huggins are soon on the scene, a truck is ready, and the wire patrol is off into the night. Sometimes it's the day. Always it rains. However, it's not a tough job. According to the AR's you can work only 24 hours a day.

Actually, there are fond memories. Most everyone enjoyed his visit in England. Everyone had trouble keeping warm but Johnson had the edge on the rest of us by being night fireman in the kitchen quite regularly and jogging home from Hook Valley Farm. Hodkinson left his duties at the Railway Inn for a few days to become mayor of Tent City, but as conditions improved he returned to his former duties of sweeping apple cores off the tracks. It was there we had our first ex-



perience in laying wire. The line we laid to "C" Company is still unused and of course no one will ever forget the many cold days we spent in setting up and tearing down S. C. R. 284's by the numbers.

Those sunny days at the chateau in Maastricht are not to be forgotten either. Especially the many times we carried radios and storage batteries up six stories to the tower and then to the ground floor again. This was a test of American ingenuity and 90% muscle. Hodgkinson suggested using a window. It wasn't that he minded carrying equipment, but he wanted to give Ingram an acid test to see if he could repair radios. One day we packed the trailer and trucked into Germany. Switchboards and radios were operated all day. In between times, we ate, washed, slept, and went on wire patrol. Interesting side lines were free PX rations and admiring the expensive German scenery. Trucking is not a dance. It's resting your soft posterior on a few slats, called a seat, in a 2½ ton truck and riding on German Super Highways which were just plain roads on account of U. S. bombing and artillery fire. Who can forget those rides? First you load a truck almost to capacity and then the troops clamber on.

Sgt. Witt and a wire crew ran lines to the various companies. The Bd 71 was used 24 hours a day. Daily routine consisted of guard, wire patrol, switchboard or vice-versa depending on your shift. While in Altenbogge we built a trailer to house the radios, switchboards and other equipment.

We left for Hildesheim the 15th of April. Wilco, the trailer, suffered from over strain and had to rest before completion of the trip. Just to show how we stick to a job until it's finished, there's the true story of Hodgkinson operating

his radio through German jamming for four days before he learned no one was on the receiving end. It was here in Hildesheim that the wires were often out and the axe marks embedded in the sidewalk.

When we moved to the factory just outside of Hildesheim we moved to a communication man's paradise. Not many outfits have dial phones or loudspeaker systems in every room. There were times, too, when we spent our day off up in the

mountains looking for "ein Fissing Wasser" as Sgt. Witt called it.

With tears in our eyes we left Wilco sitting there in the trees as we pulled out of Germany. Our only consolation was that within two weeks we would be on a boat headed for the U. S. Yeah! we fell for that rumor too.

In St. Mere Eglise we were blessed with plenty of fresh air exercises moving that huge German generator every day trying to find a place where our loud speaker system could be heard above its roar.

We're all set now though. There is the whole ocean to bathe in. We can't see why these guys complain about not having a single bathroom in this luxurious hotel. Our only problem is to get the French to notify us of the location where they borrowed part of our Carentan line so repair can be expediated.

If you have a moment, drop in sometime and visit the type of character that pleases you. If you're tired of living you will get a big lift from Sgt. Witt when you visit him alongside his bunk. Sgt. Witt is more tired than you. Johnson will cheer you with a song, or perhaps you can find solace across the street with Hodgkinson. If the future is dark, Ingram probably just blew a fuse and he'll have it fixed sooner or later. If you can't get along with your buddies have Huggins tell you about the guys he has to put up with, or perhaps you'd prefer a bitter argument with Mills. If you have any doubts Widell will give you the lowdown he has gathered from the school of experience or Diegman will tell you how things should be. If you want to see Lt. McDonald—I don't know how you will get in touch with him,—we haven't seen him in our section since we left Germany.



W. R. Marriage, C. A. Temple, T. E. Carr
S. G. Webb, L. S. Bushkill, D. A. Wallace, E. J. Weber, C. R. McDonald, J. P. Kelly
T. F. O'Connor, F. J. Stavonet, V. M. Fitch, J. E. Sparlin

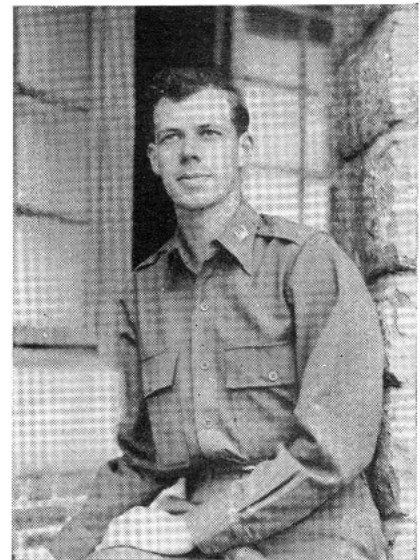
S-2 SECTION

CAPT. DAVID A. WALLACE



Looking back, it seems like an awfully long time ago that Lt. Woodrow W. Bledsoe started the S-2 Section when he went to Cadre School at Fort Belvoir in November of '43. But, it's really only a little more than a year and a half. On activation day the Section became a reality when T/Sgt. Bill Spencer took over the job of Intelligence Sergeant. During the rather confused days immediately following little was done except the manufacture of

LT. STANLEY G. WEBB



what seemed like millions of training aids, charts, diagrams and finally a chart to keep track of the charts, Gilding the lily!

T/Sgt. John Kelly, then Private Kelly, came to the slowly growing battalion in February 1944, and acting as draftsman, made most of the training aids. Shortly after this, Lt. Bledsoe left the battalion and Captain John Gibbs came from the Engineer School. Sgt. Kelly became the Camouflage Sergeant and Private Lasher was assigned the duties of draftsman. Tec 4 John Martin and Tec 4 Clyde Lauderbaugh were the Reconnaissance Sergeants and taught classes on the odograph.

After we moved from Cooke to Livingston, changes came fast and furiously. Sgt. Spencer went to OCS, Sgt. Keely became Intelligence Sergeant, Captain Gibbs was succeeded by Captain Henry J. Sorg and Lt. George R. McDonald became Assistant S-2, replacing Lieutenants Cohen and Miller. Rowen, the draftsman, came and went. Lt. Antonio Aleo joined us as Reconnaissance Officer. Private Lasher went to Company "A" and Tec 5 Robert F. Michelson became Battalion photographer, while S/Sgt. Warren R. Marriage became Camouflage Sergeant, replacing S/Sgt. Ed Colby who went to the CBI as a Chinese Interpreter. Captain David A. Wallace followed Captain Sorg as S-2 and the Section took its MTP tests with flying colors—well they were waving anyway—in almost the time it takes to tell it. At that it took quite a while, didn't it? Oh yes, and there was the security program of happy memory and the time we acted as special agents and caught only one unhappy soul from our sister battalion telephoning rather injudiciously.

We'll skip the Atlantic crossing except for Stavonet who enjoyed it. In Wincanton we acted for quite a while as the Special Service Section with Lt. Aleo doing the honors and running the memorable dances. Everyone will remember the decorations designed by Sgt. Kelly and the lighting effects created by the Communications Section at the Christmas dance.

Pfc Frank Stavonet joined the section, followed by Tec 5 Tom O'Connor, the draftsman, who got us straightened out on the British grid system. Lt. Aleo was transferred to "A" Company and Lt. Stanley G. Webb became Recon Officer, Special



Service Officer, Assistant PX Officer and everything else you could think of.

While all of this was going on, we had quite an interesting training program liberally interspersed by cold nights spent at Sherborne Park and Redlynch, French classes and much reconnaissance work, both day and night. At Christmas time when the British were worried about a large attempted prison break, we did a very hush-hush job of reconnaissance in the Saver-nake Forest near Marlborough and prepared a defensive plan for the huge

depot there and the one at—well I forget the name of the town—as the depots were the objectives of the prisoners. We also made, as a training test for the 1123rd Engineer Combat Group, a reconnaissance of and reports on the country within a five mile radius of Wincanton for which the Group Commander gave us a very nice letter of commendation that made everyone feel good.

Our Henstridge (remember the WRENS at the dances—courtesy of S-2 Section) contacts man, Tec 5 Michelson, arranged with the Royal Navee for the use of a pilot and plane, taking a good many aerial photos of Wincanton and the training areas at Redlynch. He also arranged for Capt. Wallace's first plane ride which the Captain thoroughly enjoyed. Sgt. Kelly and Tec 5 O'Connor went to a Photo-interpreters' school at Cheltenham and that was the last they've seen of Aerial photos. However, they enjoyed Cheltenham. By the way, if you don't like the way I'm telling this, you tell it!!

Meanwhile, the Communications Section, having finished its training under Lt. McDonald, assigned us four radio men to work in the Reconnaissance Section. Tec. 4 Joe Sparlin and Tec 5 Tom Carr were assigned to Sgt. Martin's section while Tec 5 Edwin Weber and Tec 5 Vernon Fitch were with Sgt. Lauderbaugh. Fitch had the additional duty of Orientation NCO for H and S Company. Sgt. Marriage gave us all some excellent classes on bridge construction, camouflage and on how to identify period silver. That was the final touch and our training was complete. We were ready for Combat!!!

Again let's skip the boat ride across to Twenty Grand—in fact, let's skip Twenty Grand. In

Maastricht, the Reconnaissance Section began to operate in earnest, making such an excellent reconnaissance of a part of the Rhineland that they received another letter of commendation, this time from the C. O. of the 1147th Engineer Combat Group. We began to think we were getting into a rut.

S/Sgt. Larry Bushkill joined us as Recon Sergeant, succeeding Clyde Lauderbaugh who went to "A" Company. Tec 5 Michelson reproduced an A-P mine manual which we immediately started using near Heimsbugh, Germany, in locating mine fields from PW reports. Nice work if you can get it and we got it. Stavonet was rather disgusted with the whole thing.

We decided (to keep near the kitchen) to cross the Rhine with the rest of the battalion and managed to stay with them all of the way to Beckum, although Lt. Webb and Sgt. Bushkill got a little ahead of it much to their regret. Jumps like this strained our map supply to the utmost and kept Sgt. Kelly worrying about whether or not our next move would be off the map . . . and it usually was. We also began to wonder what all the maps we had issued were being used for.

One of our greatest difficulties in supplying information to higher headquarters was in knowing the amount of detail they wanted. Our next job was doubly difficult in that we had been acting, heretofore, as Army Engineers and were suddenly charged with Division Reconnaissance for the 95th Infantry Division. We managed it somehow without getting shot—though we were shot at a little too frequently and several Infantry outposts wanted to know whether Sgt. Martin and Tec 5 Carr were their reliefs. Lt. Webb and Sgt. Bushkill earned themselves a place in our Hall of Fame and recommendations for the Bronze Star by moving into the town of Langshede on the Ruhr considerably ahead of the Infantry to the amazement of some startled Krauts and returned with the bacon, i. e. in-

formation on the bridge across the River. We immediately renamed Langshede, "Webbushkillville".

In the "Pocket" we also earned the name of "Lootwaffe" (named by Lt. Mitchell in a fit of jealousy) for reasons that were more than obvious at the time S/Sgt. Clair A. Temple joined the Section here and Sgt. Martin was transferred to the ADE Section.

The S-2 Section took the trip to Hildesheim a bit ahead of the rest of the battalion and made a general reconnaissance of the entire Hannover-Braunschweig-Harz Mountain area, again for the 1147th Engineer Combat Group. The Harz Mountain part of the reconnaissance was quite interesting for, besides being the home of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs and a considerable number of canaries, it was infested with some 20,000 Krauts connected with the Wehrmacht. The Recon boys, however, made it without mishap. Sometimes their luck seems uncanny, take Garron for instance—but that's another story.

When the war ended in Europe we started on our operational search of Germany or what should have been called organized looting. It became quite a job, combing all sorts of out of the way places and leading platoons to them to pick up the loot. The salt mines were a great source of supply and every man in the section acquired a brand new Mauser pistol and heaven knows what else, although Tec 5 Fitch might. Then we got orders to move to France.

Countainville!! It isn't home, but it's certainly a lovely restful haven for a tired "combat" outfit and we were enjoying our stay there. S-2 has been given the interesting job of surveying all military cemeteries of Normandy and Brittany. We anticipate classes which will materially aid in our own I and E program, but of the future—well chances are we'll go swimming, tonight but beyond that we're not sure.





A. J. Linneman, R. Kiskin, B. E. Kendall, O. G. Elliott, A. D. Elbersen
J. L. Splane, M. Leighty, H. A. Metcalfe, M. M. Herod

S-3 SECTION

MAJOR MAX LEIGHTY

LT. HARRY A. METCALFE



OPERATIONS SECTION History

The Operations Section consists of two officers and eight enlisted men, with duties as follows: One Major, Operations and Training S-3, one Lieutenant, Ass't. S-3; One Master Sergeant Construction foreman; One Technical Sergeant Mechanic foreman; One Sergeant Chemical Warfare N. C. O.; One Tec 4 Demolitions N. C. O.; One Tec 5 Electrician; One Tec 5 Carpenter; One PFC Carpenter; and One PFC Driver.

The S-3 is primarily concerned with the operations and training of the unit. The section supervises unit training, movements, job coordination, construction details, maintenance and disposition of heavy equipment, demolitions, and chemical warfare.

Until the unit arrived in France, the section was primarily concerned with training along with some minor road building jobs. At Camp Cooke, California Master Sergeant Splane, Technical Sergeant Herod, and Sgt. Elbertson worked with the 176 Engr. L. E. Company on the Pine Canyon Road and again at Camp Livingston on the South Boundry Road job.

Major Ralph W. Crump was the S-3 until Feb. 45 at which time assumed the duties of Executive Officer and was replaced by Major Max Leighty. In August of 45 Major Leighty was transferred

and replaced by Capt. Joseph J. Englehart, the former commander of "A" Company. Since being overseas the Asst. S-3 position has been held by both Lt. Sergio Casiono and Lt. Harry Metcalf, both formerly with "B" Co.

Technical Sergeant Herod worked with the Battalion Maintenance and with the heavy equipment. Sergeant Elbertson helped the Chemical Warfare training, Bailey Bridge training, and also with the surveying. Tec 4 Linneman kept charge of the office work and the many reports due higher headquarters. Tec 5 Elliot, formerly of "B" Company, joined the section to help out on the operating the heavy equipment the Battalion acquired. Tec 4 Riskin worked on the demolition work, mine training, and surveying. Tec 5 Rush worked both on Maintenance and the electrical work done by the Battalion. PFC Kendal was on the go most of the time as the S-3 driver. Master Sergeant Splane worked on the demolition training, surveying, and construction work. The section lost Tec 4 Riskin when he and Sgt. Elbertson were injured in a weapons carrier wreck near Coutainville, France after we returned from Germany. Riskin was shipped to the States and Elbertson was returned and assumed his duties after a month in the hospital.





K. G. Caspar, F. S. Honsen, G. O. Webb, S. W. Storer, S. J. Bringhurst, J. E. Vaughn, E. B. Kenyon
 A. Leibowitz, W. C. Cox, E. J. Olson, G. E. Lashlee, F. D. Hamilton, R. B. Burke, E. W. Murray
 J. T. Tucker, S. J. Aboud, W. E. Spencer, A. M. Camara, J. Tronick, R. M. Dunlop
 C. S. Tomczyk, Robt. W. Craig, C. K. McHarry, F. J. Palumbo

S-4 SECTION

CAPT. RODERICK M. DUNLOP



WOSG J. TRONIK



SUPPLIES



S-4 is supply. Food, water, clothes, weapons, trucks, all individual or organizational equipment. You'd think it would be easy in the army. You'd think it was a matter of asking and receiving. You know what you want and know the Army's got it, so you ask. You make a formal requisition which the S-4 a captain, signs. Your supply sergeant or his assistant makes a trip to the nearest depot. Then the argument starts. Sometime you win and sometime you come back to the battalion with an empty truck.

"I waited a half hour for this bum to look at my requisition. Then he tells me the form ain't made out right and furthermore I ain't authorized to draw stuff at this depot. I tell him I want to see an officer. I see a lieutenant and a captain and wind up talking to a major. The major gives me a bad time and finally I blow my top. 'Look here,' I finally tell him, 'Don't you guys ever give anything away without an argument?' The major looks at me a minute and then he okays the requisition and I get the stuff."

That was Tec 5 Arthur Camara in England. Camara said it ought to be every supply man's motto. *"Don't Give Away Nothing Without an Argument."* Capt. Dunlop saw the point and had a sign made. From that point on, through France, Holland, and Germany, Camara's legend appeared in every BSO office. It was inked in big block letters on a piece of heavy cardboard. *"Don't Give Away Nothing Without an Argument."*

Back in the States it wasn't so hard. You asked and you received. It was that way at Camp Cooke, where the battalion was activated and all initial clothing and equipment was drawn. It

was easy at Livingston, where the battalion trained and where S-4 was busy filling shortages that turned up in frequent showdown inspections.

"Don't worry about it sergeant. If you can't get it here you can get it overseas. Hell, they've got everything overseas. All you've got to worry about is packing up and getting out of here."

S-4 was tough packing. But so was every section's for that matter. You worked until late at night crating and boxing and got up early for POM training. Then you were at Kilmer, bitching because there weren't any passes to New York and standing by your bed several times a day for clothing and equipment inspections.

"What's wrong with these guys, anyway? They give me all these goddam new clothes two weeks ago and now they want to see them every five minutes. Do they think I sold them or something? Do they think I wore out two pair of shoes in two weeks? Do they think I wouldn't tell 'em about it if I lost this overcoat?"

It didn't add up but that's the way it had to be done. The Army said so. Surprising element was that shortages cropped up in every showdown. Some guy had lost his heavy underwear. Three or four soldiers wouldn't have canteen cups. There would always be a bayonet missing. S-4 would replace the stuff and for a period of ten or fifteen minutes the battalion would be equipped completely.

"Damn it, Martini (or Evans or Gouvea or Wedler), how can you come in here and tell me you're short five Engineer knives? I gave you ten Engineer knives last week. What do your men do with their equipment. No, of

course you don't know! It's men like yours that cost the government so much money. Your company is probably the worst offender in the Army. I'll bet that if I equipped that company one hundred per cent today it would be ten percent short tomorrow."

CWO Joe Tronik, Assistant S-4, began chewing in earnest when the outfit got to England. The men had managed the long boat ride without dropping too much overboard, but still there were shortages. And shortages meant long trips to outlying depots. Depots in Cambridge, London, Liverpool, Newcastle, and Cardiff. Good trips for sightseeing, but not during a typical English winter. It's cold riding the front seat of a three-quarter ton. Still, shortages had to be filled. You couldn't have men without wool underwear and heavy socks and gloves. Not when you read that the guys in France were freezing and you expected to be over there pretty quick. Some things couldn't be obtained and the depots told you, "Don't worry about it. Everything's in France. You'll get it over there."

Then came Twenty Grand and the long convoy move to Maastricht. There the water points began to function.

"Please dedicate anything you say about the water section to Red McClelland. He was one of my best friends and one of the most colorful guys I ever hope to meet. Knew water too." Water point men drew the guard details in England. There were no water points to establish so the men were used for routine S-4 and company details. KP, coal, wood and ration runs cleaning the latrine, policing the area—what a life.

KP whittled the S-4 section daily in England, and the water men were hardest hit. Cruz, Hoffman, Hollow, Palumbo, Tomczyk, Spencer, Wolfe, Lashlee, Bryson and Casper. The ration run wasn't to be compared with KP, but it was no push over either. It was cold in the back of a two-and-one-half ton and it was cold in the street-level BSO office. The boys upstairs had it easy. There was a makeshift stove and it was warm. The wide windows overlooked Wincanton's main street and the post office. You learned the first day that everyone made a daily visit to the post office. Romances began and ended there. There were tarts to be bought from White's Tea Room and English papers to be read. On the day Eisenhower begged for shells McHarry typed a neat requisition for "Prophylactics, mechanical, 2,000 each."

S-4's truck drivers did their share of KP and were busy on other days with routine runs.

A few water point men were busy on other days with routine runs. A few water point men were used on trucks, Robert McClelland among them. He was killed Jan. 2, 1945, when his $\frac{3}{4}$ -ton crashed into another vehicle near Blandford. It was the battalion's first casualty and "Red" left a lot of pals behind. He was buried in the American cemetery at Cambridge.

"I'd like to go up to Cambridge with the next run, Captain. Tucker took "Red" up there. Me and him and "Red", well—you know how it was with us. I'd like to go up and see how it is there—". Sam Aboud went to Cambridge to Red's grave with the next trip. He told us later it was pretty there. That Red had a pretty good deal, as those things go.

It wasn't until Maastricht that the water men really went to work. Al Liebowitz was the first out. With him went Wolfe and Bryson. They set up near Valkenburg, a beat-up town near the German border. We'd seen the effects of war coming up through France, Belgium, and Holland. Now we began to get it first hand. The Germans had not been gone long from Valkenburg.

"It was spooky as hell that first night. The artillery was close and we kept hearing small arms fire. I thought sure Ninth Army screwed up and put us in the wrong spot. I kept the safety off my M1 and I couldn't sleep. Then, the next morning, I found out we were in the middle of a rest center".

The other crews were out during the next few days. Casper and his men, Cruz and Hoffman. Palumbo went out with Lashlee and Tomyzek. Cox established a point with Hollow and Spencer. Some of the points were taking water from streams, some from city water mains. One crew pumped from a well. Rations weren't the best but the men liked the life. It was better than England, better in many ways than the States. Tucker was busy making the rounds of his points, delivering rations and mail a generally supervising. Points would be moved on short notice and there was some shuffling of crews. Hollow wound up with a Tech 5 rating and a crew of his own. Water point continued to be one of battalion's best deals.

"It's good out here. You ain't got somebody handing you a broom at eight o'clock in the morning or telling you how to dress. You eat when you feel like it, go to bed when you're sleepy and stay in that sack until noon. You do your work and that's all. Why ain't the whole Army like this all of the time?"

It got so the water men hated to see Tucker's

truck coming. They were afraid he bore orders to close the point and return them to the company. Return to the chicken coop.

All S-4 was pretty much away from the chicken coop in Germany, and like many soldiers who didn't fight their way in, began to find it a good war. Letters home took on the "Having a Wonderful Time" note. The truck drivers made long supply runs and saw a lot of country. Floyd Hamilton, Samek, Burke, Morris, Aboud, Olson, and Webb.

"It's the most beautiful country I ever saw. Look at those fields and that forest. You can see three plain shades of green in that forest. I wonder if they planned it that way? And these dames. Ever see anything like it?"

"I drive along and when I see a dame I whistle. If she don't wave I figure she's a Nazi and that ends it. But most of them give me a big smile and and wave like hell. I stopped on the road a day or so ago and one of these dames crawled in the back of the truck. He'll, I crawled back there to get her out, but it was a half-hour's work. Had to give her a half a pack of cigarets."

S-4's motor boat operators were driving trucks in Germany too. Vaughan, Hansen and Kenyon. Those boys had only two weeks of actual motor boat operating since Livingston. Like the water point men they'd been used on company details in England. Vaughan took rations when Camara wasn't around. Hansen did a little of everything, a lot of KP. Ditto Kenyon. "We pulled out of Maastricht about the 13th of March. I guess we all knew what was coming. We just wondered how quick it would be. We went up to spot on the Maas River about thirty miles from Maastricht and started training. It was damned plain we were going to ferry our guys over the Rhine. We were there until the 23rd. Then we moved up to the Rhine near Rhineburg."

"You should have seen that collection of boat operators. From the Infantry, Field Artillery, other Engineer outfits, and some guys from TD divisions. We were attached to the 258th Engineer Combat Battalion. To "C" Company. Three hundred operators were in our company alone.

"We pushed off on the first over at 2 A. M. on the 24th. Our artillery laid down a half-hour barrage at one-thirty, but it hadn't cold-cocked all the Germans on the other side. Small arms stuff was coming at us and their artillery let one go now and then."

"We were lucky. There's no doubt about that. We didn't get him once but we saw guys in other boats absorbing some of the small stuff. Jesus,

we got tired. We started at 2 A. M. and wound up at 8 P. M that night. Back and forth. Tanks and men. All the noise in the world right there on that one river. But we were lucky. We didn't get hit."

Vaughn, Hansen and Kenyon got citations for their job. The letter caught up with us at Hildersheim and was posted on the Old Chuck Wagon's bulletin board. Hansen made Pfc a few weeks later and awarded the Good Conduct Medal.

"You wait and see—this nonfraternization business is going to be a bigger joke than prohibition. What the hell am I supposed to do when a German kid waves at me? Shoot him through the hand? And if these frauleins keep throwing that stuff around in my face what do they think I'm going to do? Go back to the sack and read a book? Ask any of these Second Armored guys about it. Ask any of these M. P.'s around here. They'll tell you what to do."

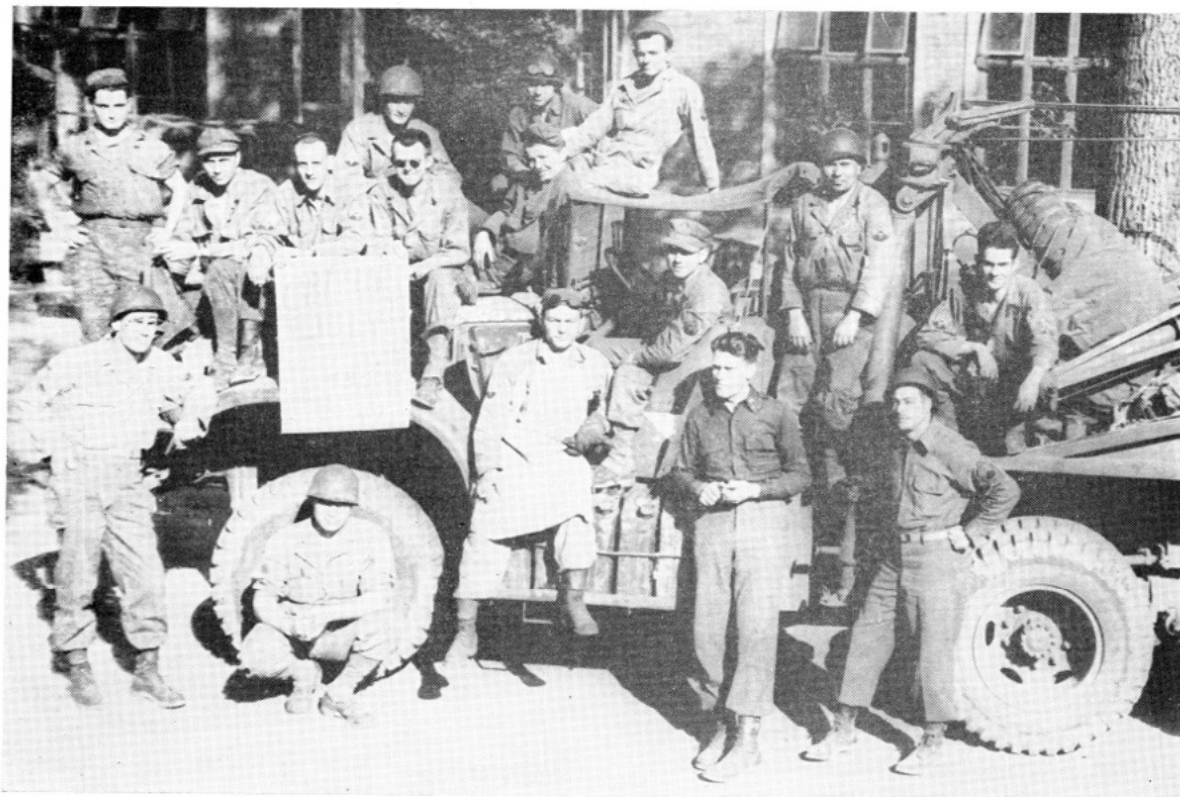
When S-4 holed up at the factory in Marion-rode it began to be hard to find. There was a sign indicating the BSO office and the men had beds upstairs. The S-4 roster was large as ever. But the men couldn't be found. The work got done somehow. The guard details went begging. Even desk chained guys like McHarry and Bothwell were sometimes hard to find.

"That Polack village was the best deal I ever ran into. Man, did those people treat you all right! This kid Wladislaus used to get me up in time for reveille, shoot me a hot cup of coffee and I'd be off. I'd show back there sometime in the afternoon and we'd lay around all afternoon listening to the radio and drinking that spiritus we got from the Ruskys. We'd eat supper sometime during the night and keep at the spiritus until we got sleepy. Then we'd go to bed. What a year to goof off!"

Capt. Autry joined the Supply Section at Hildersheim and Capt. Dunlop took over as "C" Company's CO. When the outfit moved out of Germany and into France the fun train was slowing down. For S-4 there would be more work than usual. Showdown inspections loomed and long requisitions for shortages were imminent.

"What do you mean you need ninety-six pair of wool socks! Look here, Wedler (or Gouvea or Evans or Martini) you got sixty pair of socks two weeks ago. What do your men do with their socks? No, I didn't think you'd know. You don't care. Why, if I equipped that company of your's 100 per cent today. . . ."

"No, you can't get it in the ETO, but don't worry about it, sergeant. You'll get it in the CBI. They've got everything over there."



R. E. Madsen, S. E. Primus, C. O. Hearn, G. Matthews, J. R. Gulbranson, J. M. Kuhlman, W. Schmidt
 C. O. Hearn, A. O. Rose, F. W. Todd, E. A. Liparula, J. H. Smith, J. H. Schultz, Jr.
 V. A. Robertson, F. J. DeRenzi

MAINTENANCE SECTION

WOJG V. A. ROBERTSON





An Engineer Combat Battalion is a highly mobile unit. Its ninety vehicles and heavy equipment must be in first class operating condition at all times. That is the responsibility of the Maintenance Section. Ordinarily all second echelon repairs are handled by the maintenance sections of the companies, but at any time their facilities are overworked and major repairs, such as wrecks, are necessary, the work is done by the Battalion Maintenance shops.

In the states, Maintenance was kept busy keeping in running operation the old cast-off trucks that the then, low priority 1254th was given. All of the vehicles had been through the mill, most of them through desert maneuvers with as high as a hundred thousand miles service, and they were pretty badly worn out by the outfits that owned them previously.

Enough has been said about the trip across the Atlantic, so we'll take the liberty of making a sudden jump to England. It was a bit cold the night we arrived at Wincanton, but after we had shouldered our packs and struggled up West-hill, we were warmed up. The next morning it was the general opinion that we couldn't have made the trip in the daytime. We soon moved downtown, but still had to walk the hill to go to work.

Four months were spent at Wincanton and during that time we had lots of fun. Scrump was the chief liquid refreshment mainly because you could get higher than a kite on approximately twenty-four cents, depending, of course, on the capacity of the individual. Tec 4 Todd holds the record for consuming the most scrump because he seemed to like it a little bit more than the rest of us. Each Saturday night there was a dance and we enjoyed the company of the local beauties (?). Some of the boys had steady gals while others just played the field. One or two of the fellows became more than a little interested in the feminine side of the British Navy, namely the WRENS, and Tec 4 Gordon Matthews found a home, which is a lot better than most of us could do. He even wants to go back there.

Downtown in Wincanton, Maintenance was

billeted in a wing of the old Monastery. On New Year's Eve, Tec 4 Bill Meyers had an urge to ring the church bell, but, fortunately, the rope broke and he had a repair job the next morning. Then there were the two kids, Cpl. Kuhlman and Tec 5 Gulbranson who made history by going on a bender but they didn't do much damage. The latter just spent the next week mopping the floor for endangering the health of the men of the section. Tec 4 John Fagan came out second best in a dispute with a sidewalk. The only good feature of the English climate was that it agreed with Tec 5 Jim Smith's bald head . . . he developed a nice crop of fuzz. Rex Madsen made history when he fell out for reveille at eleven o'clock at night. The only things we got free while in England were the cigars Mr. Robertson and Tec 4 John Hamilton passed out when they received word that they had become papas of baby boys.

Along with the fun there was always plenty of work to be done. We made numerous trips to various Ordnance outfits to get trucks, air compressors and parts, and whenever Lt. Verlenich took us through Bristol it was safe to bet that we would get lost before we got back (the Lt. said to mention that it was during blackout). Most of the section made the long, cold trip to Liverpool to get new trucks and John Fagan is still hungry. Just before we left England, the entire section worked for thirty-six consecutive hours processing trucks and we were ready and raring to go when they told us to move out.

The trip from Weymouth to Le Havre was plenty tough and more than one fish got a good meal out of the Channel crossing. On the way to Camp Twenty Grand, John Schultz crowded a Frenchman's wagon into a side pocket . . .



nice shot, John. Nothing much of importance happened on the way to Maastricht except that S/Sgt. Carlton Hearn was forever trying out his French (fresh from the book) on every available Belgian.

All of the time in Germany, Maintenance was kept busy and in the Ruhr Pocket (ever heard of that place?) they really went into action. Tec 5 Ed Liparula shot three times at a horse, but missed and when Fagan came to his rescue he jerked out the trigger assembly of his M-1. In the meantime, John Craig was caught with his pants down.

While we were at Altenbogge, Germany, Maintenance had their troubles. On one occasion some of the heavy equipment was headed for a German trap and it was necessary to withdraw in a hurry. Sgt. Hearn also did a quick about face when Jerry shells started dropping around him as he was retrieving a wrecked jeep. What a place that would be to have a flat tire! During our stay at Altenbogge, Liparula and Todd did a lot of work clearing the Autobahn so that it would be open for traffic. This was a highly important mission and both of them deserve a lot of credit for the fine work that was done. We were set up in a barn which we shared with the animals—confidentially we stunk.

When we left Altenbogge, we thought we weren't stopping until we hit Berlin, but our destination was Hildesheim. None of us will ever forget the Fraulein who used to stand around our area for hours watching us work. It wasn't that we minded feasting our eyes on the very lovely figure, but we were limited to just that . . .

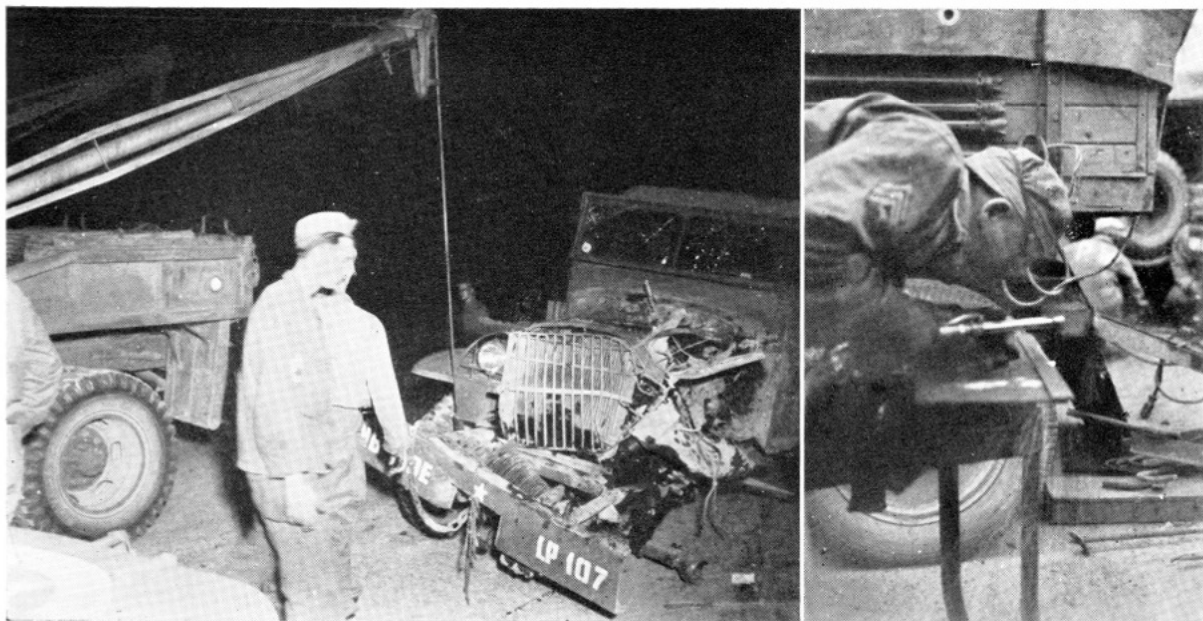
you know, that sixty-five buck fine. Then too, there was a bunch of stinkers from S-1 and Communications Sections who had mounted a powerful set of binoculars in a third story window through which they kept a close watch on our activities. Tec 5 Dick Rush got less sleep than anyone because every time he went to bed someone would call for the electrician to fix the lights which were forever going kaput.

Tec 4 Todd and Tec 5 Stanley Primus helped the 138th Engineer Combat Battalion build bridges and clear the Autobahn, with Todd getting a commendation for his work.

The best deal of all was at Marienrode where we had a modern garage with all the conveniences. The day after V-E Day we got a half-holiday, taking our liquor ration out in the woods for a picnic where Frank DeRenzi made an unsuccessful search for snipers.

When we got word to leave Germany we were so enthusiastic that our trailer carried the sign, "USA OR BUST". Later it was changed to "BUSTED"! The trip from Marienrode to Ste. Mere Eglise, France gave us plenty of grief trying to get the heavy equipment over low bridges. One of the six tons got temperamental and was limping along most of the way. We were all set for a boat ride and not a bit particular where, except that we were just a little prejudiced toward the United States.

Altogether, the Maintenance Section has had a lot of fun, but when work was to be done they were always on the job. We think our mechanics compare with the best and our welders and body man have done some marvelous jobs rebuilding some badly wrecked vehicles.

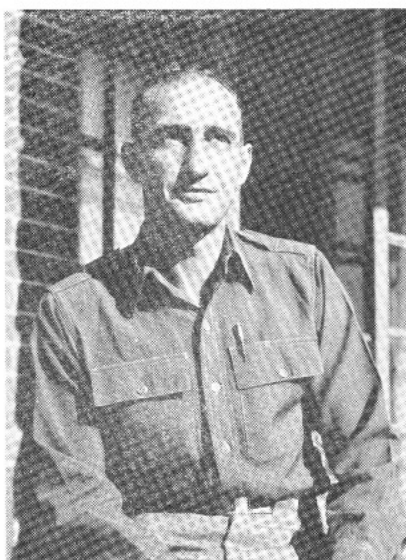




A.D.E. SECTION

LIAISON

CAPT. R. G. MEINTZER



A.D.E. HISTORY

The Assistant Divisional Engineer Section of the 1254th Engr. (C) Battalion was organized at Camp Livingston, Louisiana, just before the Battalion left of the ETO. Captain Russel C. Meintzer, the section leader, selected 3 newly arrived men from Camp Reynolds to form the enlisted part of the section; Norman Hyams, Louis Rouniker and Robert Pendell. At Camp Livingston, Capt. Meintzer was acting S-4 and Hyams, Rouniker and Pendell pulled details in every section, especially the kitchen and S-4. At least they learnt that every one in H and S Company did a lot of work besides being soldiers.

A. D. E. became active when the Battalion arrived at Wincanton, England (some of the men who know us best might object to the word "active", but that is mere jealousy), where our time was spent in becoming acquainted with the duties that would become necessary in combat. Subsequently we learned how to drive the $\frac{3}{4}$ ton truck, much to the relief of the S-4 section on whose trucks we practiced.

When we left for France, as part of the advanced party, we took our truck for the first time. It wasn't until we reached Maastricht, Holland that we really started to function and then we got a little insight of what was to come later on our nightly trips to Group at Baal, Germany, to get the "Poop". Black-out driving was a necessity since the nightly meeting at Group was late in the afternoon and lasted several hours. The day time activities of the section was varied, from driving the $\frac{3}{4}$ ton on runs to preparing Orientation material and Special Service Posters. Hyams left the section at Maastricht and went, according to the rumor, to SHEAF in London, England.

Our first stop in Germany was at Kaldenkirchen and here we had our best "set up" so far. The A. D. E. section was given over to Orientation and Special Service almost entirely, with the exception of Capt. Meintzer, and moved to a hotel to set up a day room for H and S

Company. The very day the Day Room and Orientation room was completely finished we moved to Beckum.

At Beckum we were close to the war and A. D. E. really started to function. We followed a platoon from a line company to the 8th Armored Division for several days and got a real close, almost too close, look at combat. Our stay here wasn't very long and the Battalion was soon on the road again moving back to the Ruhr Pocket. The Battalion settled at Nordinker, but the A. D. E. section went on to join the 320th Engineer (C) Battalion as liaison unit. No need to tell of the towns we were in, we moved too fast to do more than spend one night in one place and sometimes twice in one day. By this time we had acquired a jeep and another man to take the place of Hyams; John H. Martin. With the acquisition of the jeep the $\frac{3}{4}$ ton became a movable office and we found that everything we needed to operate was a roll of paper, a note book and some colored pencils. The rest of the equipment stayed with the $\frac{3}{4}$ ton and was seldom touched. The elimination of the Ruhr Pocket brought us an easy assignment at Hildesheim, Germany with a large factory for billets and offices. Here the war ended and we were given opportunities to see the surrounding country via jeep and plenty of free time. We continued our Special Service work, orientation, and driving to Group.

The war was over in Europe and of the two opinions that everyone had, sitting around doing nothing was not one of them. Consequently when we got orders to move we were sure that we were going to do something, but instead we only went to Coutainville, France. The same work that we were doing in Germany continued in France. A. D. E. definitely went out of style here, but there was always work of some kind to do. Now we are sitting in Belgium waiting for that boat that will take us home and permit this army to become a memory.



MEDICAL DETACHMENT

How many of you men in the battalion know who your Medics are? Possibly 80% of the men can tell me the name of each and every man in the detachment. During our time with you, we've had the opportunity to meet you personally, often in your birthday clothes, and administer to your specific needs. Yes, I grant you at times, many of you thought that the Bed Pan Commandos didn't do you justice. Be that as it may, we do our best! No one has fallen by the wayside for want of medical attention. We cannot and will not cater to the personal whims of fancies that some expect us to do. Ah, my lads! The wool must be thick before it can blind us. We do not want you to feel that nothing can be done for any illness, ailment or accident you may have. Remember—it takes much longer to build than it does to tear down. That is as true in the Medical realm as it is in the Engineering field. Our treatment will not cure a wound that took a bullet only a split second to make. Persistence is the cure! Three fourths of all cures are brought about by the individual concerned.

Does that introduction sound like a tirade? It is just that we want you to realize that we

know how you men feel about the Medics. We overlook anything that may have happened in the past. We think most of you have benefitted from your visits to us. No charges have been made for medical services . . . just put it on the cuff, and our cuff is extremely long. Come in any time for medical attention, or if not for that, how about a little chat? We have some fairly intelligent boys in the Detachment and, by the way, have you spoken to your Aid Man recently? Give him a cheery greeting once in awhile, tell him all your troubles and you'll be surprised at the amount of attention you will get in return. The Aid Man should be everyone's friend. Is he yours? If not, may we suggest that you do something about it now? No one wants to feel like an outsider among his fellow men. Would you?

On 15 December 1943, the first Morning Report of the Medical Detachment was interesting in that it listed only three enlisted men present for duty and no Medical Officers. The report was signed by an Engineer Officer, 2nd Lt. Charles C. Mitchell. The cadre consisted of Wesley Goldsberry, Roy Jones, and Bob Schauer.

As the months slipped by, the Detachment increased in strength. On 17 January 1944, Captain Lloyd B. Stewart, D. C. joined the unit. We had a big day on the 13 March 1944 when John King, Jack Newhouse, Bob O'Connel and Wally O'Connor joined us from the 11th Armored Division. A few days later Ed Piston and Eino Lakanen, the Grim Finn, were added to our strength. The latter is still remembered for his commands, "Forward Harsh" and "Medics fall out . . . for training purposes only." In April, Captain Robert E. Lloyd became Battalion Surgeon and the listed strength was augmented by the assignment of Gennaro Columbus and Dewey Gunter.

Good old Camp Cooke. The influx of new men from all parts of the country brought many a trying day for the Medics making the necessary almost daily processing, shots and more men to go on sick call. The largest formation in the battalion was Sick Call for awhile and Colonel Browning was beginning to wonder why so many misfits and aching backs were being sent to him to build an outfit.

The move to Camp Livingston, Louisiana made more work for the Medics with large sick calls resulting from the heat and chiggers. On June 6th Lt. Col. Bishop assumed command of the Battalion and then hell really started.

Late in the summer "Dame Rumor" got hot—"we were going overseas!" POM physicals and shots were the big job along with trying to reassign Class D men. Every ache and pain a man could possibly think of were and related to us at great length. "My back, my feet, my stomach, my arms give me trouble. Can't walk over a mile and then I ache all over. Can't move my arms up over my head. The pain starts here and shoots down my back and along both legs and feet. What can be my trouble, Captain?" Those stories were heard so much that we could draw only conclusion, "Feverus gang-plankitis." It was there all right!

During September and early October a brisk trade in manpower developed and we think we got rid of more bad ones than we got back in return. Every outfit apparently had the same thing in mind, hence the reason for the poor timber in some cases.

By the time we were ready to shove off from Livingston, we were short five men due to cadre and transfers, so requisitions were put in for replacements. This draft brought us Tec 3 Orval Arends, Tec 5 Charlie Bilunas, Pfc Alvin Costello and Pvt. Ray Homan and Robert Woods.

At Camp Kilmer and physical examinations were out of our hands and on the boat we had

only to deal with sea sickness, but all men came through all right at the end of the boat ride.

In Wincanton the Medics set up their dispensary at 47 High Street across from the Dolphin Hotel. Our quarters were in the old Carmelite Monastery which was a sort of spooky place and it took us awhile to get accustomed to that medieval clock chiming the hours.

The Detachment wolves lost no time in taking a reading of the situation. It seems that there was an endless discussion by the English, comparing us with the other lot, viz, the 3rd Armored Division. Then there was our first introduction to the English Pub. When you walk into the door it is necessary to tighten your belt, pull in your chest to keep from bumping the four walls, then if you are lucky enough to be built like an eel, you might be able to slip up to the tiny bar and quietly request some "scrump" or "bitters".

By the way, after a couple of weeks there was a lot of discussion about many of the neighboring small towns. Just what was going on out there at Cucklington? It seemed as though Jones and Wiebe would disappear too frequently in that general direction just to see the country hedges. Just ask "Pop" Woods, maybe he'll give out with something entrusted to his confidence. Also Arends was nowhere to be found in the Pubs many dark winter nights. It couldn't have been that he was sitting with some blonde beside an old styled fireplace—or could it?

Moving along with the Battalion from Wincanton to Maastricht, Holland, nothing particularly important happened to the Medics. While in Maastricht, S/Sgt. Roy Jones was admitted

CAPT. ROBERT E. LLOYD





CAPT. LLOYD B. STEWART

to the 25th General Hospital at Tongres, Belgium, and nothing was heard from him since.

We were most fortunate, while in Germany, in that we had no battle casualties, but we were kept busy treating displaced persons who were wandering aimlessly about the countryside. The Aid Men were with their Companies to get in on all the fun.

Then a sudden change took place when we moved to Hildesheim and then to the factory at Marienrode, a very expensive feat of architecture having a master radio system in all the offices. We never will forget the Polish Camp, the Russian Doctor and her assistants and especially the emergency Woods had to make to the German hospital during the night hours. Woods was becoming a nervous wreck, never knowing if the baby would be born in the truck. There just doesn't seem to be any MOS for "Midwife, male, enlisted".

Now about the men of the Medics, as of July 1945 as we look out over the beach at that French gal with the classy chassis. First there is Captain Lloyd—a nice, clean looking chap who hasn't been snared yet by any female into giving up the joys of single-blessedness. Then there is Captain Stewart, a Missourian way down deep, who willingly lends a sympathetic ear to anyone who has troubles. Quite a fishing man too, he is older than Captain Lloyd, but not so old that he doesn't have some young ideas. Why else would he want to go to Paris so badly?

That takes care of the officers. Now for the EM. That new Staff Sergeant who runs the de-

tachment is Point, you know, the guy with the perpetual "Sad Sack" look. He replaced Staff Sergeant Jones who missed out on the vicious Ruhr pocket campaign. The Aid Station personnel was unchanged throughout the campaigns, Arends, Wiebe, who was Doc Stewart's assistant, O'Connor and "Pop" Woods. Woods was the oldest of the lot and continued his salesmanship throughout his Army career. His "relaxed ring" didn't seem to have any effect on his sales ability. We wonder if his wife knew that he sold everything she sent him. Once a storekeeper always a storekeeper. Woods was a reliable chap to have behind the wheel as we never did get lost. Funny! He didn't see so well either.

The Aid Men in "A" Company were Tec 5 King, Tec 5 O'Connell and Pfc. Costello. Costello is the little guy who comes from New York, near Albany. King and O'Connell are good buddies, King spent his first wedding anniversary in Europe sans wife. We can imagine how he felt. He does have a "good looker" for his one and only. O'Connell, the chubby one who wears glasses, was popular and more so because his folks kept him well supplied with chow.

In "B" Company your Angels of Mercy are Tec 5 Columbus, Pfc. Gunter and Pvt. Schauer. Columbus is that stocky Staten Islander who has been threatening for so long to write that book. The wiry lad from North Carolina is Gunter who sang and whistled those weird tunes that could come only from that section of the country. We never did know whether he married that nice looking girl from his home town. Odessa was her name! Schauer, who has that Ishkabibble haircut, hails from Washington State, where he made good money picking some sort of brush that was used for floral purposes.

"C" Company has three good boys. Tec 4 Jack Newhouse, a good technician and conscientious worker, is married but hadn't enjoyed that bliss for long before coming to the ETO! He seemed to enjoy roughing it with the line companies. Ray Homan, the Washington, D. C., boy, is short, stocky and full of loud noises. He is a good boy, just full of the pep and vigor of youth. Charlie Bilunas is that tall fellow who sticks close to his men. He is seldom seen at the Aid Station and he has done fine work for his platoon.

That was your Medical Personnel in the ETO. Rest.

By S/Sgt. CHARLES POINT.

[illegible]



CAPT. JOSEPH J. ENGELHART

"A" COMPANY IN A NUTSHELL A Stirring Drama in One Act

Words by T/4 R. A. Sorensen
Pictures by T/4 R. A. Sorensen
Neon Lights by Franco-American Electric
Company, Paris

The day—Dec. 15, 1943. The hour—high noon. The place—Camp Cooke, Cal. The characters—14 enlisted men (a cadre), hardened, tired, and used to dust in their eyes. Not a very awe-inspiring start, but still a start, and that's all that is necessary. Anyway, that was the beginning of Co. "A" of the 1254 Engr. COMBAT (put it in caps, Mr. Editor) Battalion.

In case you have wondered, there also was an officer—Lt. Gerald Autrey, now a Captain—to lead this crew (and it certainly was a crew), and the only thing lacking was a crowd of EMs for them to put through "the mill".

According to the morning report, the only notation after this momentous date was on the 20th of December when it cryptically states "usual garrison duties". What it should say was "S/Sgt. Jones was permanent latrine orderly" because that was closer to the truth, for there were a lot of stripes pulling "private's details" in those early days. Not only was "Jonesy" the latrine orderly, but the K. P. and guard rosters were very stripe heavy also.

The first EM other than the cadre to have the honor of going through this new "mill" was

Cpl. Robert Carter—then a Pvt. and fresh from A. S. T. P. With him came two others, so it was easy to see that things were picking up, but it wasn't until Jan. 16, 1944—one month and a day after activation—that it was a surety that Co. "A" was really an outfit, because on this day a memorable character by the name of Taggart went AWOL. From that time on Co. "A" was an "outfit" and no one could deny it.

With the coming of spring the company began to bloom like a flower. There were the additions of more men from A. S. T. P., men from the 240th FA, the 11th Armored Division and other outfits all over the states, besides a few direct from reception centers. Activities for the ensuing months began to take shape and a pre-basic training period was put into effect. In the last part of April '44, Capt. Darrie H. Richards became CO and Lt. Autrey became one of the platoon leaders. In early May, Sgt. Hatchet became the first EM to go to OCS and on the 17th of May, S/Sgt. Jones, who had been acting 1st soldier, was elevated to that rank.

While the company was doing all of this flowering, however, the individual men were valiantly doing their best to put up with (1) Camp Cooke generally, (2) "J" area and poison oak specifically, (3) wind off from the Pacific, (4) dust all over (and under) their M-1s at Retreat, (5) dust all over their barracks at inspection, (6) dust, and (7) the 170 miles to Los Angeles and Hollywood. Due to censorship regulations it is impossible to report any individual verbal opinions of this period. Close questioning of the men has indicated, however, that they consider this to be the "dark ages" of their military career. This reporter is inclined to agree.

As May marched merrily along (in cadence) rumors of moving began to crop out. Unlike most rumors these were evidently based on fact, because the last of May saw the lucky ones with autos (mostly cadre) chugging blithely off to Camp Livingston, La., at the government's expense, while the rest of us "choo chooed" on a nasty ol' troop train. We did beat the autoists tho, for they came straggling in for days after our arrival on May 30th. T/5 John Brown won the booby prize for being the last to report. So ended an era and so began one.

Training at Camp Livingston was, in the most part, a continuation of that which had been started in California, but every condition was reversed. Where it had been cold, now it was hot. Where it had been dusty, here it was moist and sticky. Rifles would rust overnight and heat rash was an affliction that practically every man

had to endure. Salt tablets were a familiar sight on the mess hall tables. On June 22, the first contingent of men left for Camp Bowie, Texas, to become cadre for the 1300th Engineers, and on the 24th the remainder of the men departed. This group was headed by S/Sgt. Orman, who became 1st Sgt., and included Sgt. Heinz, T/4 Wells, Cpl. Nemschoff and others.

In the second week of July the technicalities of the foot bridge, ponton bridges, and Bailey bridges were mastered at and near Camp Claiborne. The "Bailey" was built and torn down under intolerable heat, and S/Sgt. Densmore will go down in history as the only man that ever "passed out" from hollering, "Lay ho! heave."

As the summer wore on and our forces in the ETO were struggling heroically to push back the Germans after the D Day landings in France, it became more evident that soon we would be headed for overseas duty. Which way we were going or when we did not know, but as the furlough lists became longer it was the common belief that our length of time to remain in the states was short.

In August five men were assigned to OCS in Ft. Belvoir. Sgt. McElroy left on the 3rd, Cpl. Tempia on the 15th, and Cpl. Cooney, Cpl. Gutstadt, T/5 Geil, and Sgt. Elkins left on the 21st. To fill these vacancies we acquired six men from the 508th MP's and in all Co. "A" had sent six men to OCS.

Our suppositions concerning overseas duty were correct, because in September we definitely knew that we were going. Preparations were beginning—last-minute furloughs were caught up—physical inspections were made—physically unfit men were transferred (we all thought that we belonged in this category)—and the preparing and crating of tools and equipment was begun.

On October the company was brought almost up to strength with the addition of twenty-one EM's from Camp Reynolds, Penn., and on October 13th (a Friday) we had our last look at Camp Livingston and started for Camp Kilmer, N. J., which was one of the staging areas for the New York P. O. E. We arrived on the 16th and by the 20th had our clothing inspected about four more times (when does this end?), had showed our dog-tags at the physical, was taught how to abandon ship (by a cute little man with pinch glasses—P. S. A pfc. How do they get those jobs?), instructed in the use of the overseas gas mask, and drilled in the techniques of filing on a train. This last little trick was mastered with the delicacy of a ballet dancer. We

also had our first bouts with censorship and it became very evident that we were going to be obliged to develop a few new ways to say, "I love you," 'cause that's about all that we could say (thanks WD). Unfortunately our time in Kilmer was short and no passes to New York or Philly were issued. This fact was particularly heart breaking to Sgt. Berkowitz, who waxed long and loud on the joys that awaited him in New York if he could only get there.

We did get there, however, on the 21st of October, but not with a pass in our pockets. Instead it was with every damn thing we owned strapped on our back, which was a considerable weight. The "extras" that we had swiped and soap that we had purchased at the Kilmer PX didn't help matters any. Because of this we were all glad to board the H. M. T. Tamaroa (a Limey boat) just to get a chance to extricate ourselves. Of course, we had some choice names to call the ship when we did see it, but they were more than justified as the ensuing days proved.

The 22nd of October as a day was bright and clear and during the morning our ship (still the Tamaroa—damn) pulled out of the harbor and we had the opportunity of seeing the skyscrapers of New York receding in the rear. A blimp flew overhead, adding a military touch as our convoy formed and we began our journey across the Atlantic.

It is perhaps best to record the sea trip in terms of "spot" recollections. First the food was prepared lous—, I mean limey. The ship's PX which sold large "Hersheys" and tomato juice kept us from starving (remember two meals a day?) and the Tamaroa was everything we had said she was. Wearing the life preservers was also adjudged a pain in the . . . (insert your own word) and the fragrant little rooms with the blue lights were found to be rather a suffocating place to smoke a cigarette after black-out. There also was a colorful character (both literally and figuratively) that rumor said was an English Marine Sgt., whose lurid tales enlivened the intervals between trips to the rail. The games of chance ran "full speed" except during the period known as "boat drill" (also



a pain) and were everything that the name implies. All in all the trip wasn't too bad (Oh Yeah!), but we were glad to set foot on dry land again even if it was England.

After a bit of a ride on an English train (getting on and off was a problem) we arrived in Wincanton after dark (and very). We lined up in little neat rows and then "Heigh Ho, Heigh Ho, it's off to work" we tramped to Camp Westhill. It wasn't until later that we discovered that we had climbed a hill that was almost vertical. Food awaited us and somehow we found a place to sleep. It was Nov. 3rd, 1944—our first night on foreign soil.

Soon after our arrival—Nov. 15th to be exact—the company commanders of "A" and "B" companies were exchanged. Capt. Joseph J. Engelhart assumed command of "A" company and Capt. Richards went to "B". Not long after this exchange Capt. Richards was transferred to the 244th Engineers.

Even tho' we were not in the states, training was continued while we were in England. High spots were the two trips to Wallingford where we attended Bailey Bridge school. The emphasis was placed on Floating Baileys inasmuch as we had never built them in the states. These two trips can be distinguished from each other because the first was wet, muddy, and very muddy and the second was icy cold, and very cold. On the second trip Pfc. Daniels and Pfc. Yates (then a member of the company) burnt their tent down in order to enjoy the trip more. The bridges were constructed in record time in the typical "A" company manner (take that! "B" company) which won the commendation of the school staff.

The Runstedt offensive (Battle of the Bulge) forced our training program to emphasize infantry tactics. As a result we spent many HAPPY days running, crawling, and gasping on our bellies as we assaulted Redlynch Hill. It is the opinion of many that this campaign should have a "theatre ribbon" of its own. This famous hill also has another name that is best not put in print.



On Jan. 23rd Sgt. Sollie departed as our representative to attend a mine school in France, so he was the first man in the company to go "over the channel". He also was the first man to visit Paris—a fact that caused all of us to look upon him with envy, but that feeling turned to sober reflection after his lectures on German mines and the German techniques.

On the lighter side of the English sojourn was the revelation that 90% of the English women wanted to go to America, wanted us to take them, and wanted to get married. We balked at all suggestions along these lines, however, because in most cases we were (1) Married and (2) Very Much. If we didn't want to spend our time evading these subtly made suggestions there were the "Pubs" for those who did and the "Canteen" for those who didn't. Both had their followers. Two day passes to London also helped while away the time because we could spend two days there following our own pursuits (which we did with enthusiasm) and at least nine days lying about it upon our return. It also gave us a chance to get a good bath.

On Washington's Birthday 1945 we bid "goodbye" to Westhill, were stuffed with "C" rations at Piddlehinton (cute name isn't it?) got sick going across the channel, landed at Le Havre, and finally arrived at Camp Twenty-Grand, France on the 26th of Feb. In the eight days we were there we (1) lived in tents (2) cussed the French for not letting us cut down more trees (3) froze to death seeing movies in a tent and (4) were issued bed rolls. This last item we fell in love with immediately. Pvt. Flaherty, however, ran into difficulties with the "zipper" because it seemed to stick in the vicinity of his mid-section. The night of the 7th of March found us tired and weary in Maastricht, Holland with fleeting memories of Northern France and Belgium (from the rear end of a truck) to remind us of the two day trip.

It was in Maastricht that our work really began. More than a year had passed since activation—a year of preparation to do a job and when it was assigned we were disappointed. Our lot was to stay in Holland (at least for a while) and work in a bridge material depot instead of proceeding immediately into Germany. We were disappointed, but not daunted and fell to our assignment with all the enthusiasm we could muster. The Rhine was yet to be crossed and we knew that the material in the depot would soon be urgently needed at the front. Even tho' the convoys moved up and past us we were secure in the knowledge that

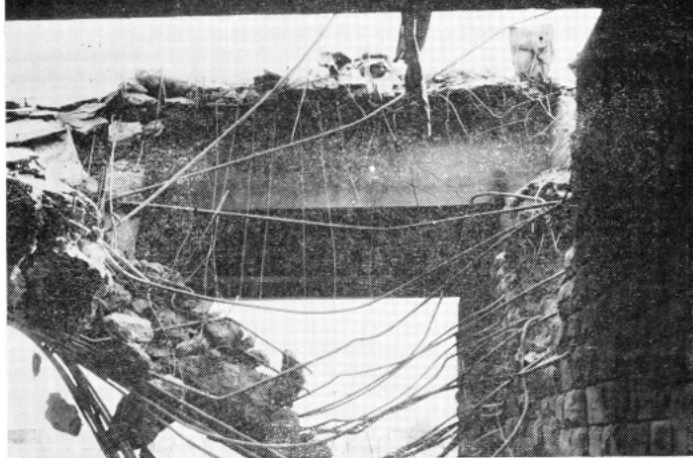
we were playing a part in a great and tremendous military operation—an operation that would compare favorably with the Normandy D-Day landing as one of the greatest in all military history.

While we were in Holland some of our men, however, did get a chance to go to the "front". Lt. Hoobler was in charge of a group of truck drivers from the battalion who drove supplies across the Rhine. T/5 Beaver, T/5 Mahan, Pfc. Daniels, and Pfc. Hodgkins were some of the men in this group from "A" company. 1st Sgt. Jones was placed on D. S. with the 244th Engineers in order that he might keep a pact with Major Richards (promoted from Capt. after leaving "B" company)—a pact that they made in Camp Livingston that they would "cross the Rhine together." From Sgt. Jones' stories upon his return, we knew we could have done as well if not better, if it had been our assignment.

Our arrival into Germany wasn't until nearly a month after we had landed on the continent. It was the 31st of March, the day before Easter, and the location was Kaldenkirchen, Germany, just over the border. Here we saw the training film on Fraternization, wished that we could, and watched the 1st platoon pop off to the town of Kempen and come back the next day. Our next stop was Beckum—120 miles away. We left on the 6th of April.

The trip to Beckum necessitated the crossing of the Rhine at Wesel (where the 9th Army crossed on the 23rd and 24th of March) and skirting the "Ruhr Pocket". This was accomplished by means of a night motor march using blackout lights with the sky to our right constantly lit up by artillery flashes. It was cold and wet and the breakfast of "C" rations tasted good.

Upon arrival in Beckum on the 7th of April the 2nd and 3rd platoons under Lt. Verlenich and Lt. Aleo respectively, were attached to the 8th Armored Division. During this operation when they were in direct support of an 8th Armored task force two Bailey bridges were constructed, one at Belecke and the other at Ruthen, both across the Mohne River. These bridges secured communications and provided facilities for units of armored forces to flow to the south bank. On the 8th of April (the next day) the entire company was attached to the 8th Armored working principally on the main supply route at the immediate rear of the combat units. As the Division moved west into the "Ruhr Pocket" the company moved with



it and operated on roads and road block removal, so that forces using these supply lines would not be slowed in any way. During this period as we moved from Beckum to Soest, from Soest to Werl, and from Werl to Altenbogge, men from "A" company often worked ahead of the artillery and in the immediate rear of the advancing infantry.

In all of these operations the platoons worked as individual units under their platoon leaders with special assignments although each were operating in the same general vicinity of Soest-Werl-Unna.

During the period that we were at Altenbogge the 1st and 2nd platoons, under the direction of Lt. Hoobler, constructed a 70 ft., two way, 3 main, one-story truss Bailey bridge on the Reichs-Autobahn. At this time we were attached to the 95th Infantry Division and the Autobahn was the divisional MSR. It was one of the first bridges of this type to be constructed in the ETO and it was built in 4½ hours.

On the night of April 15th the third squad of the 1st platoon departed for Anderbeck, Germany where their mission was to guard a train loaded with demolitions, and an abandoned demolition factory. They were joined by the remainder of the platoon on the 17th and on the next day received more much needed help from Sgt. Cooley's squad of the third platoon. During this time the remainder of the company was with the battalion which had arrived in Hildesheim, Germany on the 16th.

The reconnaissance patrols of the surrounding territory that were performed in conjunction with the regular guard duty revealed German soldiers that were captured, interrogated for information, and then turned over to the 8th Armored P.W.E. at Halberstadt. One patrol led by Lt. Aleo captured 6 prisoners, one having been killed in his attempt to escape. Among them were members of SS Troopers, Panzer-Grenadiers, Service Luftwaffe, and Artillery. An-

other patrol uncovered 7 Germans, 2 of them officers, living in the vicinity of the factory, who were former combat men but were working on a limited-service assignment in the ammunition plant. Careful interrogation failed to reveal any information that was not already known, and few displayed any "do-or-die" Nazi fanaticism.

This whole period of guard and reconnaissance patrol was a bit nerve wracking for the men due to the ever-present danger of attack from any quarter, because of the very "fluid" nature of the "front" at that time. Sizable enemy patrols were known to be operating in the immediate vicinity and it was thought that the amount of demolition on the train at Anderbeck and at the factory was a prize too great not to attempt to capture or at least destroy. The night hours of guard were particularly tense, and it was a rare night that the staccato crack of M1s did not punctuate the darkness as someone fired at a fleeting shadow. The guards walked in twos and the order was to "fire at anything that moved". The smallness of our numbers and the isolated nature of our geographical position made it necessary to take no chances.

During the time that the 1st platoon was at Anderbeck the rest of the company were performing much needed road repair in the vicinity of Seesen, Bad Harzburg, and Hildesheim. They had moved from Hildesheim on the 22nd of April and returned on the 27th. It was on this return trip that the "chow wagon" which was former Mess Sgt. Tidwell's pride and joy decided to go on a little excursion of its own. The story is as follows:

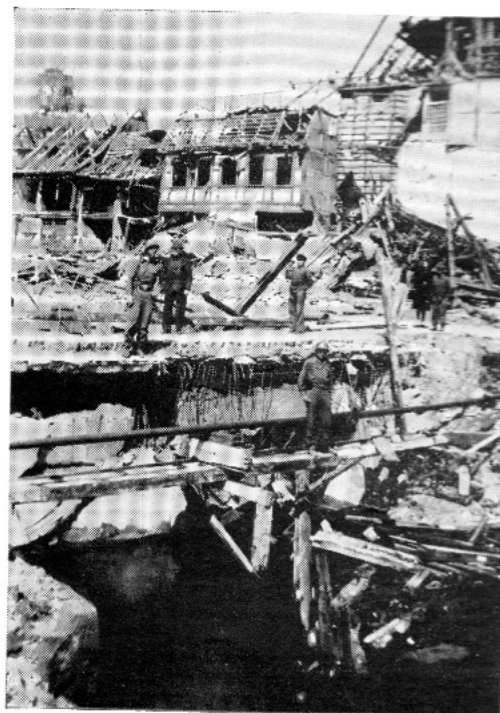
While going down a slight grade T/5 Adams, the chow truck driver, noticed a trailer passing. He casually mentioned this to Tidwell, "There's a trailer just like ours". Tidwell looked, then with eyes bulging let out an anguished scream, "My God—that is ours!!" Ol' "Foxhole" Hodge, upon hearing that decided to get religion in a hurry. "I might have been in the damn thing", was the only comment that he would make.

On the 13th of May the 1st platoon returned to Hildesheim where they joined the rest of the company. Germany was defeated and the acquiring of what was left of her strategic materials was begun. Under the direction of Lt. Lathrop (Lt. Hoobler having joined "C" company), Lt. Verlenich, and Lt. Aleo, lumber, electric motors, electrical supplies, hardware, and water pumping material, and other items were collected, loaded on rail cars, and shipped to various depots located throughout the conti-

nent. This work was continued until orders came to move.

Moving was of great interest to all of us 'cause we had been in non-fraternization territory much too long (or so we thought) and were getting a little tired of looking in all directions before we sidled up to a gal even if she was Polish. Tho' our policy had been "Co-habitation without conversation is not fraternization" we knew that this theory wouldn't hold much water at a court martial. In a way Germany had been good to us tho'—all of us still had so many souvenirs (after mailing what we could) that we almost had to come to the conclusion that to carry them we'd have to discard some of our equipment. It is said that Americans are the greatest souvenir hunters in the world—all one had to do is look at us. That statement is certainly correct.

It was on May 27th that we began our long trek back to France. Our path was in a great part the same one we used in coming into Germany—back across the Rhine at Wesel, through Maastricht, Holland, and Liege, Belgium. We then traversed along the coast of Northern France and on May 30th reached our French destination—the small village of St. Mere Eglise near the original D-Day landing beaches. It was 359 days since American forces had landed on the continent and 532 days since "A" company had been activated. We had gone far and done much, but the most important feature was the thought that we had reached "fraternization" territory once again and perhaps—perhaps we might soon go home.





LT. LOUIS S. MILLER

HQ. PLATOON "A" COMPANY

The funny little incidents that happen to the men around us are the things that most of us will remember when we get out of the army, that is if we are still able to remember anything by that time. Catfish Able's Hq. Pltn. has its share of clowns or "characters" and as a result we have had many a good laugh at the antics of our various comedians.

Our motor section has supplied us with plenty of laughs. We all remember the time that Sgt. Ciaccio, "the Newburgh Kid", became seasick on board the HMS Tamaroa. The good sergeant's face kept turning all different colors from hour to hour. At 0900 it might be green, at 1000 pink and at 1100 a brilliant purple. Not that the rest of us felt any too good while aboard the "meat scow", but Sgt. Ciaccio certainly looked as if he was suffering the most.

One of our first casualties took place at Wincanton, England. Tec 4 Alexander, better known as "Buster B", was found lying outside of his barracks one day at about 1215. It seems that Buster was making a dash for the chow line and fell down in the rush.

If everyone else in our platoon was as serious as hell we would still have plenty of laughs as long as Tec 5 Raymond "Shake the hand that shook the hand of Buffalo Bill" Rapp was around. One night Rapp and a few of his buddies were sipping cognac in a cafe at Bagnoles D' Lorne, France. The town crier suddenly appeared outside on a bike and read the local poop to everyone within earshot. This tickled Rapp, who was in the mood to be tickled by

anything. Tec 5 then did a disappearing act, but reappeared a few minutes later riding a bicycle. He stopped in front of the cafe, rang a small bell and proceeded to read something in French. Incidentally Rapp doesn't speak any French. A lot of Frenchmen are probably still trying to figure out what he said that night.

Our slum burners make up another interesting group of GI's. To tell all of the funny incidents that happened to this group would fill a book. And since we're not writing a book I'll only tell one or two adventures of the hash slingers.

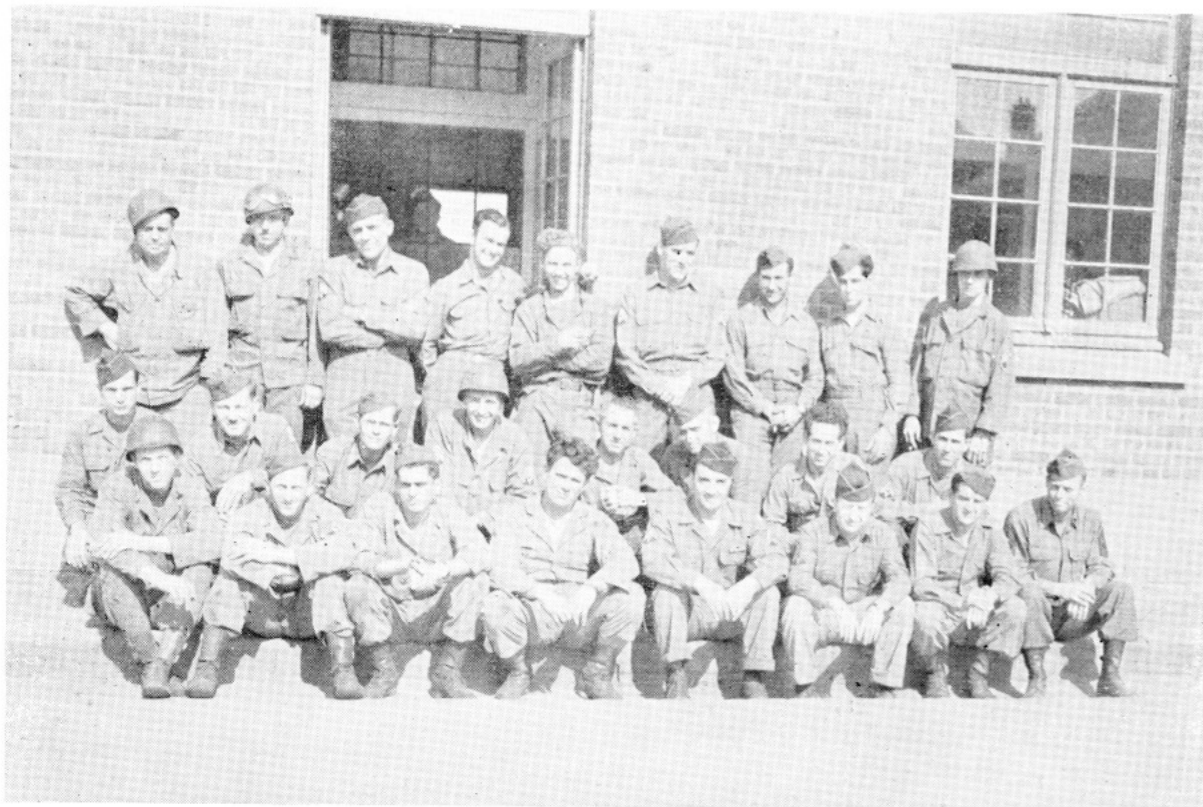
Tec 4 James D. "I'm no slow leak" Hodge, also known as "Foxhole", probably came closer to getting a purple heart than anyone else in the platoon. Early one morning old "Foxhole" was whipping up a batch of powdered eggs in Hildesheim, Germany when a shot rang out and something whizzed by the burner's ear. The first shot was followed by several more and by this time Hodge was wishing he was back in Panama. When the firing stopped "Foxhole" was still in one piece but a big pot containing powdered milk had a hole through it and the milk was running all over the place. Who said that cooks never see any action?

Tec 4 Emerson Bergia, who claims that he lost his marbles somewhere in the ETO, spent a lot of time in Wincant, England cooking corn willy. In fact he cooked so much corn willy he couldn't even stand the smell of it. You can imagine how he felt when he opened a package from home and found inside a can of—, you guessed it, corn willy.

This article would never be complete without mentioning the radio section which consists of Tec 5 Nial "Class X" Handley, Tec 5 Floyd "Curley" Covalt and Tec 4 Richard "Is Cuban Itch catching?" Ried.

Tec 5 Handley will always stand out as the man who was able to lie in bed until thirty seconds before the last call for reveille when he would jump up, get dressed and run outside in time for the formation. He even told me that he used to wash his hands and brush his teeth during the half minute, but I seriously doubt that (and so does everyone else). "Class X" did snafu in France one morning when reveille found him waiting in the chow line instead of in reveille formation. The following Sunday was spent wrestling with pots and pans in the kitchen.

Just to keep the record straight it should be mentioned that Tec 5 "Curley" Covalt's hair isn't really curly. In fact in some places on his cranium it is impossible to find any hair at all.



MEN OF HEADQUARTERS PLATOON, COMPANY A

R. E. Owens, -----, B. R. Alexander, C. C. Kocher, Adams, W. L. Landl, R. L. Leiva, M. I. Gouvea
 R. J. Hull, A. Benfield, J. S. Dvorovy, K. G. Overmeyer, R. C. Ried, R. E. Owens, J. D. Hodge, Katiflamo
 J. A. Gibbs, F. L. Hantsch, R. L. Rapp, -----, S. Prodonovich, E. Bergia, D. Attilio, C. B. Azes
 Robt. Jones

I wish that there was space enough for me to write a paragraph about each of the men in Hq. platoon. Since I can't do that I would at least like to mention their names.

There are Pfc.'s Hantsch and Overmeyer, our jeep jockeys, two swell fellows. Then there is our team of six tonners, Joe Dvorovy and Bob Arnold, commonly known as "Joe Heavy" and "Heddy Cole". We also have two good cat skimmers, Tec 5 Kocher and Pfc. Alva "Mopey" Hughes. "Mopey" is probably the least excitable fellow in the ETO. Tec 5 Steve Prodonovich, the big Serb, is quite a boy. Another great guy is Pfc. Bob Owens whose specialty of administering first aid to the cognac guzzlers was certainly appreciated by a lot of us.

A good word goes to our Staff Sergeants, Leiva, Gouvea, and Hull. And we can't forget the regular army which is represented by Tec 5's Brown and Morris or the driver of A2, Pfc. Krupski. Tec 5 George Anaschutz, an electric

generator expert, is one of our boys and so is Tec 5 William "I want to see these guys right now" Landl, about whom I could write volumes. And we can't forget Tec 5 Sam Gibbs and Tec 5 Jim Attilio, two of our slum burners.

Then we have Cpl. Benfield, company clerk, the Hq. man we never see. Another good fellow was Pfc. Joe Peckrofsky our PX man who left the outfit in June 1945.

And last but certainly not least we have 1st Sgt. Edward Jones. All 1st Sgts. are supposed to be big hard-boiled guys who rule with an iron fist. Well Sgt. Jones isn't very big and he isn't hard-boiled, but still he sees to it that the job is done which is the main thing.

That just about ends our tale of Hq. Platoon. All in all the outfit is made up of some of the best damned Joe's in the world and as long as we have to be in the army most of us probably prefer to stay right here in Hq.



SGT. ROBERT M. NADY



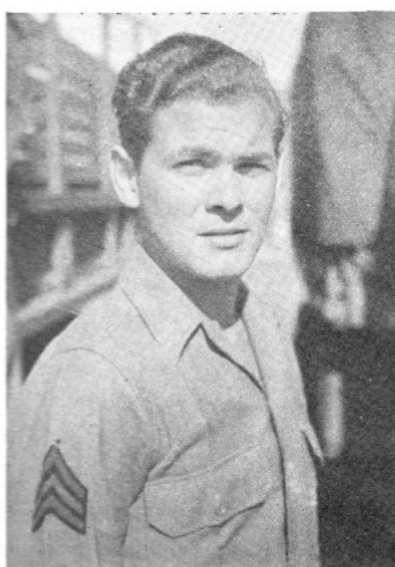
LT. DANIEL B. HOOBLER



SGT. W. E. PALMER

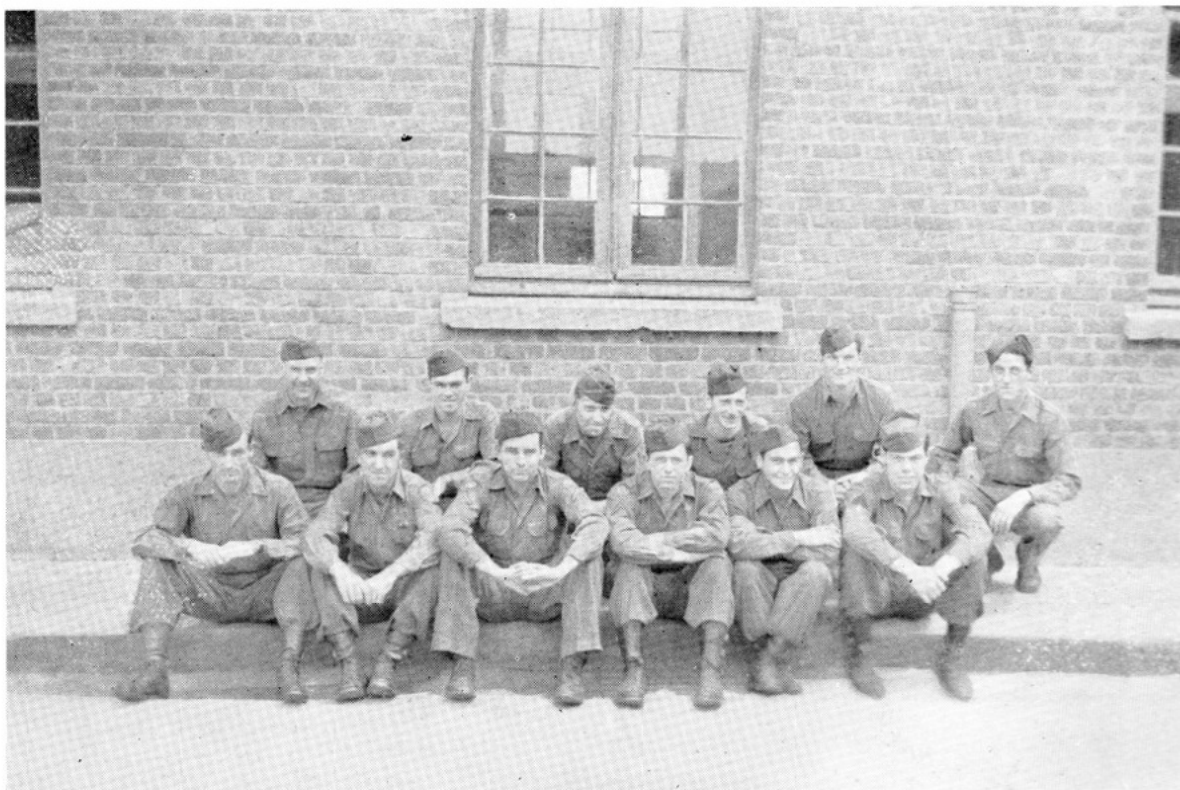
FIRST PLATOON ABLE COMPANY

SGT. LAWRENCE JASKOLSKI



SGT. STANLEY W. MCGINTY





MEN OF 1ST SQUAD, 1ST PLATOON, COMPANY A

R. M. Nady, M. Boyd, R. S. Hinkson, A. Peters, R. W. Rees, J. G. DeSanti, J. W. Orr
W. S. South, J. F. Lamb, E. Bollinger, D. Thomas, R. H. Daniels, C. B. Sluss

FIRST PLATOON "A" COMPANY

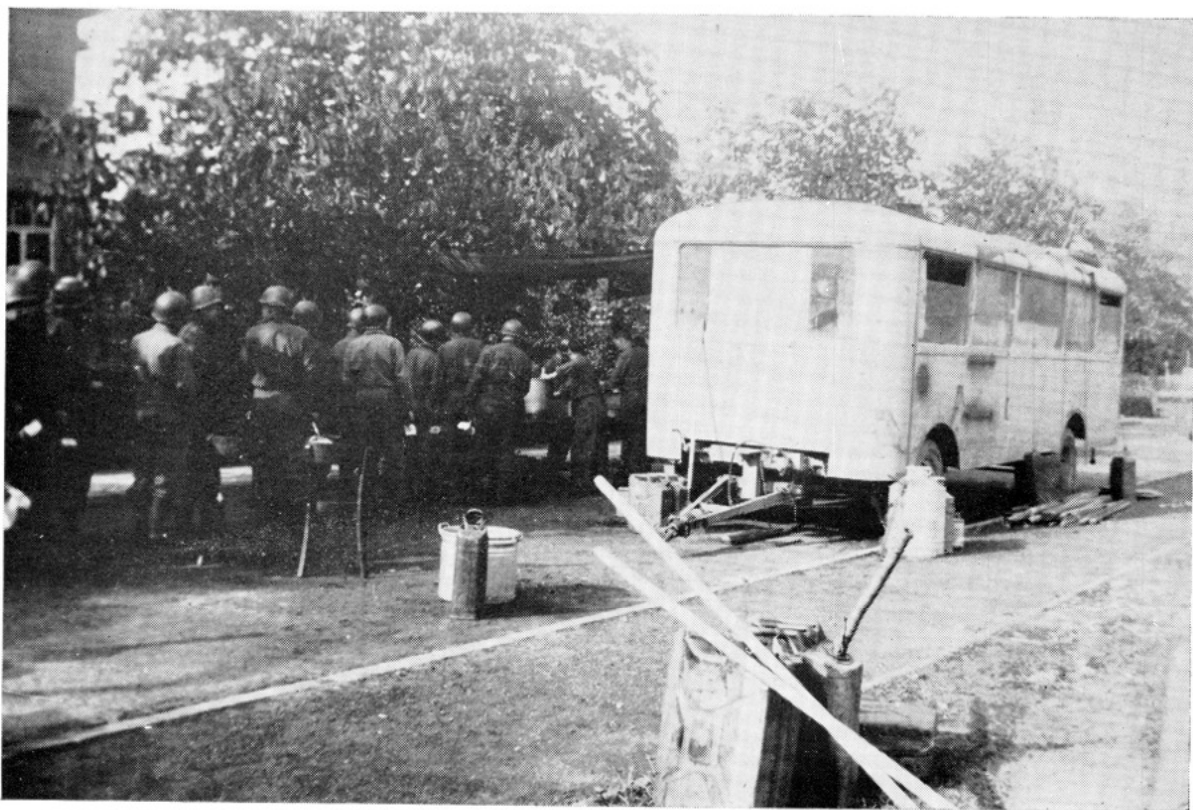
When the 1st Platoon of "A" Company finally decided to return to the welcoming arms of the other platoons of "A" in Hildesheim, Germany (it was suspected that the "brass hats" also wanted us back) after their hero-making sojourn in Anderbeck, Germany, it was decided to place them in a large, spacious, duplex house across the street from the Company Orderly Room. This house had been vacated by the civilians (with much wailing and gnashing of teeth) a few days before the platoon moved in on a Sunday (always a Sunday) with bag, baggage, and loot.

We had been warned about keeping a close watch so that civilians could not enter the house after we moved in, but there was no stopping the woman who barged through the door a couple of days later spouting an excellent line of English without the trace of an accent. It seems that she

was the owner and was bemoaning the barbaric things that we had done to her lawn, her flowers, and the woodwork. She charged madly through the whole house, talking constantly about everything she saw amiss, while at her heels trailed Tec 5 Philip Lodovico, who was keeping a watchful eye on her so that she would not have the opportunity to pick up any of the GI's personal property.

Inasmuch as all of the men who happened to be in the house at the time were regarding the whole proceedings with not too silent amusement, the woman became more furious than ever, and turned toward Loddie to give him the full benefit of her lashing tongue. He gently ushered her to the door and then with an air of bland innocence delivered this parting shot.

"Nicht Versteh English," was all he said, as he firmly closed the door in her face.



MEN OF 2ND SQUAD, 1ST PLATOON, COMPANY A

E. F. Mutter, I. C. McBrien, L. F. Carneal, S. W. McGinty, J. K. Crawford
W. E. Beavers, P. A. Lodovicko, J. S. Costales, A. S. McCormick, F. P. Gonzolas
F. R. Brewster, D. F. Andritz, W. J. Fleming

Last night I had a funny dream,
I dream't I passed away,
And straight to heaven I arose
And got a harp to play.

A GI DREAM

St. Peter went out on a pass
And didn't get back 'til late.
So I was put on guard that night
To watch the "Pearly Gate".

All at once I heard a voice,
A familiar one at that.
A Colonel in a jeep drove up
Right to the "Welcome" mat.

He said, "Don't stand there like a fool,
Wipe off that silly grin.
Send out two enlisted men
To bring my luggage in."

I said, "Oh no, I'm sorry, Sir,
You've made a grave mistake.
You won't need all that luggage,
Just a shovel and a rake.

Now why'd you bring that bedroll?
It's hot enough down there,
And "OFF LIMITS" to enlisted men
But this time I don't care."

You used to give me lots of hell,
And called me "Old Sad Sack",
But now "Sad Sack" has got his day,
So here's your hell right back."

Be on your way its all down hill,
Make it "on the double",
And as he disappeared down there,
I said, "Goodbye", to trouble.

I knew it was too good to last,
The bugler made me jump,
Gee, to have a dream like that
And wake up in this dump.

Now when I see that Colonel
I can't look him in the eye,
'Cause if he could but read my thoughts,
I'd be on K.P. 'til I die.

"A" Company
PFC. ALFRED "ALFIE" PETERS,



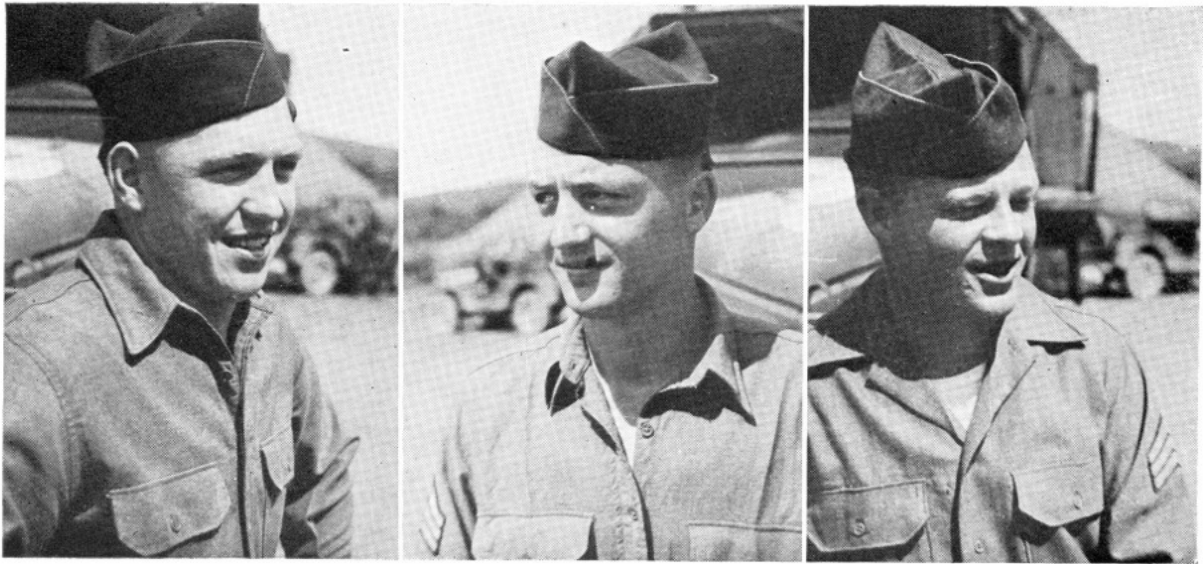
SHEREBOURNE PARK

MEN OF 3RD SQUAD, 1ST PLATOON, COMPANY A

L. E. Jaskowski, L. L. Carneal, C. E. Lauderbaugh, C. B. Sluss, J. F. Hurley
T. W. Poe, R. J. Laier, U. D. Sickler, D. Loch, R. W. Earl

WINTER OFFENSIVE 1944





SGT. D. E. FOUGHT

SECOND
PLATOON



LT. DONALD D. VERLENICH

"A"
COMPANY





LE HAVRE

MEN OF 1ST SQUAD, 2ND PLATOON, COMPANY A

R. H. Daniels, M. G. Lowry, L. Capozio, R. H. Elston, J. P. Josh
R. C. Lux, A. E. Lewis, S. J. Juszczak, P. E. Chany, W. E. Palmer, H. C. Pfaff, J. L. Dalgarn

MAASTRICHT

MEN OF 2nd SQUAD, 2nd PLATOON, COMPANY A

J. E. Birchall, D. E. Fought, C. R. Wallen, J. D. Yates, N. Ward
J. A. Stoudt, F. D. Wills, G. I. Adams, L. W. Kirkhoff





"COMMENCE FIRING"

MEN OF 3rd SQUAD, 2nd PLATOON, COMPANY A

J. E. Carter, G. Neiderhiser, J. Hillmen, J. Newsome, O. Hunter

J. R. Rommelmeyer, Z. Jackson, W. C. Lacy, P. E. Brintnall, A. A. Vlad, C. A. Trautwein

HILDERSHEIM



LT. ANTONIO ALEO



SGT. FRANK STANKIEWICZ

SGT. IRVING BERKOWITZ

THIRD PLATOON
"A"
COMPANY



THE RHINE

MEN OF 1ST SQUAD, THIRD PLATOON, COMPANY A

H. Silverstein, H. C. Goad, I. Berkowitz, W. C. O'Connell, H. F. Jamison
J. Noakes, J. Vehan, L. F. Lardinois, E. W. Proudian

THIRD PLATOON "A" COMPANY

It was deep in the heart of Germany, twelve kilometers from Werl, and the Third Platoon of "A" Company had two missions to perform, one to keep the roads open, and the other to destroy two German pill boxes filled with ammunition and explosives.

The Platoon was instructed by Lt. Aleo, the Platoon Leader, on the complete mission and the situation before the take off. We were to work within enemy artillery range and there was a possibility that snipers might be on our left flank. It was also thought that the surrounding woods was mined and booby-trapped so we were not to venture into this territory. Lt. Miller and Lt. Verlenich were also going to go along with us.

After traveling some distance toward our destination, we came to a cross road where we stopped while Lt. Aleo consulted his map as to which direction we had to travel. During this short break some of the men climbed out to relieve themselves and it was during this time that a huge explosion took place about 100 yards down the road from where we had stopped. It is impossible to describe our surprise. The fol-

lowing is a few of the quotations which took place:

Pfc. Burris, "Artillery!!!"

Lt. Aleo, "Follow me!!" (and before the men could remount the truck all that could be seen of the Lieutenant and Burris was the cloud of dust that the jeep left in its wake).

Lt. Miller, "Disperse the men—get in the trucks—step on the gas—what's the matter?—let's go!!!"

Tec 5 Catania, "What's the matter with this truck? The motor's skipping—Gimme an airplane!!!"

Lt. Verlenich (waving his arms widely in vain), "Stop! Come back! Where are you going? It's only a mine."

Some three kilometers down the road (it was finally decided to go to the right) the Platoon arrived at their destination. The demolition men were called out to blow up the pill boxes while the rest of the men went to work on the road. It was a quiet day except for the distant chatter of machine guns and rifle fire and the occasional reply of a German 88 to our own Artillery and tanks. The pill boxes were primed and the road



CAMP COOKE

MEN OF 2ND SQUAD, 3RD PLATOON, COMPANY A

F. A. Stankiewicz, S. N. Crohl, R. L. McCartney, Jones, C. N. Davis
L. K. Sickafus, Moore, J. H. Everhardt, G. Barong, Keas

guard were put out and inasmuch as each pill box contained 3000 lbs. of explosives it was thought best to put a seven minute delay on the time fuze. After the seven minutes were up there was a terrific explosion and boulders of concrete weighing at least 500 lbs. shot toward the sky. The men working on the road and the men who were acting as road guards were taken by surprise by this sudden explosion and everyone sought some kind of cover with no regard for booby-traps, mines, or dead Germans. Here are a few more remarks made during these few seconds.

Tec 5 Reis to Tec 5 Noakes, "Get out of this fox-hole! There's no room here."

Tec 5 Noakes (trying to push Reis over), "Take it easy kid, there's room here for both of us."

Pvt. Lahrheim, "They've got our range!!!"

Sgt. Stankiewicz (to Pfc Hibbs as he pushed him out of his way), "This tree is mine, I'm a Sergeant!!!"

After it was all over Bob Jones looked at Sid Crohl and said, "Were you scared, Sid?" "Naw". was the blase answer, "I was just running because everyone else was."

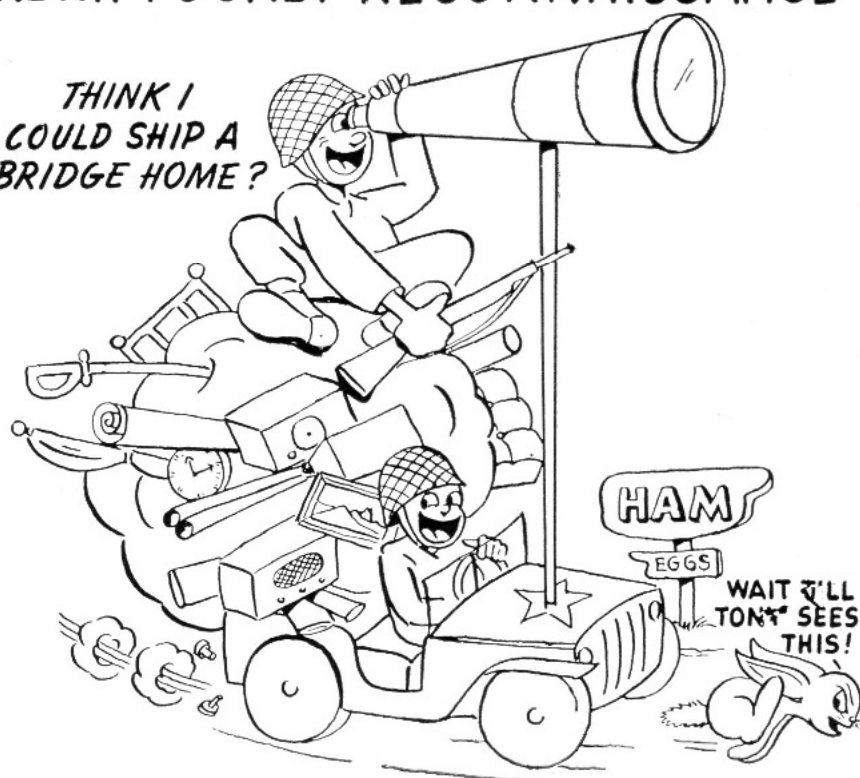


MEN OF 3RD SQUAD, 3RD PLATOON, COMPANY A

J. E. Nickerson, T. R. Catania, L. B. Heck, S. Watson, R. H. Smart
 F. C. Bone, R. Rees, W. Buford, F. G. Furrner, G. Watson
 L. Cornelius, J. Cooley, C. Schuler, Smith, A. N. Meese

RUHR POCKET RECONNAISSANCE

*THINK I
 COULD SHIP A
 BRIDGE HOME?*

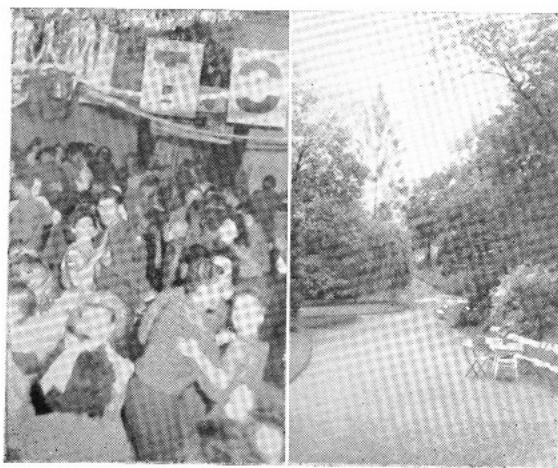




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CONTINENTAL ATMOSPHERE**

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Europe's Famous Orchestras

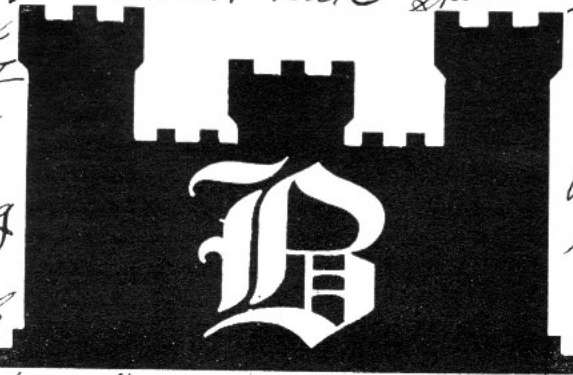
Calm serenity prevails
in our Hidden Garden

HARMONY CLUB

Verviers, Belgium

Jack Chambers, Mgr.

Marion Hall Guy R. Lucas Nicholas J. Floyd P. Fier
 Wallace E. Hall Guy R. Lucas Nicholas J. Floyd P. Fier
 Guy R. Lucas Emer J. Martinez Russell B. McWhir Stanley Ostaja
 Raymond Villalobos Gacho Charles J. Shelton James L. Long
 James Willinger Charles H. Workman Ricardo Dela Rosa Joseph Glow
 John Arnold Gordon Adams Mrs. Westreich Bob Alexander
 Henry Belknap Edward Badowski John Cressenau Edwin Bailey
 Rene Banhard John Benwick Guy Benson Raymond Beaton
 Clifford Drackshaw Edwin Boyle Charles Blasing
 Juan Castillo Edward Brown Raymond Bringle Sidney Bowers
 Ernest Capell Coy Burnett Robert Burkett Brown
 Thomas Cole Larnu Coats Roy Clark Angelo Terminara
 Ignatz Gelmer Thomas Burger Roy Walter Cotner Howard Courtney
 Harold Duplantis Joseph Gillick John Engmon Albert Haigle
 Lindy Frederick William Garner James Fischer Andrew Fero
 Boyd Siller Clarence Francisco Harold R. Bickimoff
 Cristobal Gonzalez Malcolm Frank Harold R. Bickimoff
 Clyde William Ex William Ex
 Joel Gottlieb John Ex
 Nell S. Hagworth Thomas Ex
 Richard Harding
 Jesse Howard Hersch
 Bernard Irving
 Walter E. Jago
 Marshall Simpson James Kelly Stanley Juszak Oliver Farrett
 Melvin H. Teder Jimmie Edward W. LaFon
 Wladimir Y. Laule Regor Robert Lindvall Harold A. Lipson
 Clarence W. Cune Jr. Luther Matthews James L. Long
 Marion McClure John White Walter McKiss Robert M. Lendon
 John Noakes Francis O. "Magg" Richard Alstranger
 Nathan Pinsky Joseph O. "Magg" Richard Alstranger
 Joseph Matthew Piotrowski Jessie Perduekard Earl Sato
 Warren Potter James Pender Gordon O. Plummer
 Stanley Cameron Joseph Pope Eddie Rabago
 Clarence Reynolds William Reeves Modesto Reyes Joseph Rinaldo
 Howard Sagert Harold Rol William Ripples
 Joseph Skoczylas Anthony Szabo W. and Jimmie Salyers
 John Steptler Charles Stiller Edward Sweet Harry Spade
 Herman Thompson Charles Test Sullentrop John Szewczyk
 Harold Von Lee Robert Ulrich James Toler Robert Turnquist
 George M. Vincent Arthur Van De Keer Robert Turnquist
 Harry White Ralph West Charles Vollmer Charles Wallace
 William Wright Albert Wiseman Wayne Ward Ellsworth Warnick
 General J. Weeks





CAPT. GREVIAN DELVAILLE

"B" COMPANY HISTORY

At 0001 hours, when most good soldiers are sleeping, on 15 December 1943, the 1254th Engineer Combat Battalion gave birth to Baker Company. Fourteen men formed the nucleus of the company. Here is the list of the original cadre:

Edwin V. Boyce	1st Soldier
Leo Rasmussen	S/Sgt
Charles Noble	S/Sgt
Wilbur Hill	S/Sgt
Eddie Rabago	S/Sgt
Clair Temple	S/Sgt
Clarence Coats	Sgt
Willard Bartlett	Sgt
John Myrick	Tec 4
Erhard Wagner	Cpl
Edward Keefer	Tec 5
Norval Hanna	Tec 5

Look at that murderer's row!

A few days later 1st Lt. Woodrow W. Pratt came to assume command of this growing organization. With all that rank we had to start with, it might be well to say that Douglas Hopper was the first Private to start pulling KP and guard duty with the company.

Then came the usual period of waiting for fillers to arrive and they did just trickle in. By the first of January, 1944, there were 18 men present. Evidently that was a period when the draft boards didn't have too many friends and neighbors to help them along or the fellows were too busy making \$1.65 per hour to pay attention to Uncle Sam's call to arms.

Our officer strength grew, (moral support for Lt. Pratt) when 1st Lt. Bledsoe and 2nd Lt. Hardies joined the company as platoon leaders.

It was during those lonely months of waiting for fillers to come in that the men we did have were experiencing pre-Basic training and the joys of pulling KP and guard duty every other day. Some of us have never gotten rid of that dish water look on our hands.

Our training at this time included marches, night problems, over-night bivouacs and we can't forget those Saturday inspections. One incident which will long remain in the minds of many occurred the night of a scheduled compass problem. It seems that one platoon of Company "B" got lost and showed up late for the critique. Colonel Browning was determined to find the man who was at fault: first the CO, then the platoon leader, platoon Sergeant, Squad leaders and finally the buck was passed to a little soldier who had been connecting file. The Colonel took one look at him and made this brief statement.

"Don't put your 8 balls on such important jobs". Unquote. But, in spite of that unfortunate incident, this "8 ball" has advanced to the position of Squad Leader in the first platoon and is doing a bang-up job. (Editor's Note: His name will be given to anyone by writing to the Adjutant General and inclosing one billiard ball.)

May 1st found the company with 178 men present for duty. (Washington had started working again and many men found out that Hershey wasn't the guy who makes chocolate bars.) Furloughs had started, promotions were being given and the CP was a beehive of activity.

Basic training had started and we've always said there is nothing like a fast five mile hike before breakfast . . . then going back to pick up your stomach.

More officers on May 25 . . . Lieutenants Hager, Scott, and Rascoe. Fort Belvoir was right on the ball.

May 27th . . . a memorable day. It was quite a sight seeing those carloads of GI's saying Good-bye to dear old Camp Cooke. They had the strangest way of saying farewell, a routine that consisted of sticking out their tongues, using their ears as a pivot for waving their hands and making guttural sounds similar to the braying of a donkey. We loved the place.

It was nice to travel in those 40 and 8 coaches, so clean and refreshing. After a while we began to refer to each other as the guys with the "soot-suits". We finally arrived, after 2076 miles of riding, at Camp Livingston, a beautiful camp nestled away from everything in the swamps of Louisiana.

The month of July 1944 marked our first introduction to that well known military tool known

as the Bailey Bridge. For a straight week we built bridges of every type and our backs were crying for relief. This Bailey Bridge has been accurately defined as the answer to a weight lifter's prayer.

Captain J. J. Engelhart now assumed command of "B" Company and Lt. Rascoe made first.

Other training included a one-week bivouac during which it rained every day except the last day when we returned to camp. But we were a rugged bunch.

They said "This outfit will never go overseas!" How wrong some guys can be, because on the 14th of October 1944, "B" Company left for Camp Kilmer, New Jersey where we were processed for one week. Then, on a wet, rainy and altogether miserable day we boarded HMT Tamaroa on the 21 October at 1430 hours. A band played some light jazz music while we sweated out coffee and doughnuts from the Red Cross. It was a serious moment for all of us when we saw the Statue of Liberty passing astern from us. A few of the boys even looked up from the crap game to take a last look at the old girl.

A Special Service outfit helped make the journey pleasant by movies, recorded music, shows and books. We even had a Mail Call in Mid-Atlantic, but that same Mid-Atlantic also brought sea sickness and a feeling that you wanted to die.

We arrived at Camp Westhill, Somerset, England, on November 3rd. Many of us thought we'd never make the big hill with a full field pack after having two weeks leisure on the boat, but we did. The boys immediately started adapting themselves to the "Limeys". Pubs began to liven up as some happy feeling GIs started cutting loose with a few lusty bars of "Pistol Packin' Mama".

Captain Darrie H. Richards took command of the Company for a short period, only to be followed by our present CO Captain Delvaille.

England wasn't a vacation spot. Strenuous mobilization training started and we got our fill of tactical problems, bivouacs, Infantry Training and marches, marches and more marches.

For one hectic week we again had a course in Bailey Bridges only this time in a foot of slimy mud. That wasn't what the boys minded so much, but they figured that the British Tommies should build them in view of the fact that Bailey, the designer of the bridge, was an Englishman.

January 1, 1945 . . . a new year and everyone celebrated. This company must have consumed quite a few gallons of liquor because everyone

was in a happy mood. We drank toasts and resolved that by the coming New Year we would all be home. (Forgot about the CBI, didn't you boys?)

Goodbye England. On February 23rd we moved to a marshalling area, loaded on LSTs and LCIs and took a rough ride over the Channel. Everyone got sick including some of the sailors.

We arrived at Le Havre, motored to Camp Twenty Grand and on March 7th we stopped at Maastricht. Here Lt. Casciano replaced Lt. Mecalfé who went to H and S Company. The boys will long remember the code name Mary, which was the designation of the engineer dump we operated day and night to keep the stuff moving to the front.

From Maastricht to Kaldenkirchen where we spent Easter and enjoyed a chicken dinner.

After a series of moves, we were beginning to wonder if we should change that C and G and call ourselves the Gypsy battalion. We finally settled down for awhile at Hildesheim, Germany where we had to get accustomed to good billets, showers and shaving with hot water.

This little story of Baker Company would be incomplete unless we dwelt a bit on the merits of the individual sections and platoons of the company.

The Orderly Room under 1st Sgt. Boyce and the Supply Room under S/Sgt. Martini had quite a job on their hands keeping everyone supplied with mail, PX rations, passes and clothing. Lester Munson, the L.A. boy, keeps us happy by bringing mail and Air Mail stamps.

The Radio Section was kept busy servicing and operating five radios and nine mine detectors which were more than a little temperamental. We depended on the section for communication with Battalion when there were no telephones available. Those little SCR 300's proved invaluable in controlling convoys when we were on the move. The three Dot Dash boys of our radio section are Tec 4 Bowman, Tec 4 Billheimer and Tec 5 Fischer.

The Motor Pool deserving of all the praise we can give them for they've done a wonderful job in keeping our vehicles in tip-top shape. On the trip from Hildesheim to St. Mere Eglise, France, a distance of around eight hundred miles, we had only 7 flat tires for 27 trucks. The outstanding record was set by Tec 5 Villalobos, driver of the $\frac{3}{4}$ ton, who has had only 2 flats in 14,000 miles of driving on all kinds of roads. Most of you know about B-8, the jeep that is a combination of five different jeeps. When it was picked up, the frame was broken in three places and it was minus tires, wheels, wind-

shield, seats, batter, hood, distributor or generator.

But from that pile of junk, "B" Company mechanics created a serviceable vehicle. This work was done by S/Sgt. Peterson, Sgt. Cotner, Tec 4 Engman, Tec 5 Rasmussen and Pfc. Van de Keere who make up the motor pool staff.

If you think it is easy to cook in the back of a 2½ ton truck while it is bumping along the road, just try it sometime. Thanks to the kitchen staff, we have "A" ration meals almost all of the time while on convoy. Another difficulty that had to be overcome was to get hot meals to all of the platoons when they were spread out on various jobs. The men got hot chow through the combined efforts of S/Sgt. Czekner and his kitchen crew, Tec 4 Bouchard, Tec 5's Kuzma and Shelton, Tec 4 Ferro, Pfc. Burke, Van Dyne, Duplantis and West.

The "Fighting First" under Lt. Rascoe, the bridge platoon, had the distinction of building one of the first dual carriage Bailey Bridges constructed in the ETO.

The Demolition Platoon, namely the second, was responsible for clearing the Autobahn of blown bridges. To add insult to injury they used Jerries' own explosive to clear his wrecked bridges. Just because they're the demolition platoon didn't get the Joker Platoon, as it is called, out of building bridges as they had to build two on the Autobahn, and a Class 70 across a canal.

Last but not least is Lt. Campbell's third platoon which specializes in road work and to them fell the lot of patching up all the shell holes on the German Superhighway. An unusual job they had was the operation of a premix plant. Fortunately enough of the men had civilian experience which enabled them to take over the various departments of the plant and turn out enough material to keep a Battalion of Engineers on the job all of the time repairing roads. Their strangest assignment was taking down a floating Bailey Bridge, one abutment of which was in Belgium and the other in Holland.

There it is men, a play-by-play description of one and a half years existence of "B" Company. As for the future, we suggest that you consult the nearest Star Gazer. And if there are any comments on the literary style, just remember that the writer is bucking for a job as Stars and Stripes Reporter.

PFC. RAYMOND D. BENTON



THE FAMOUS FIGHTING ENGINEER SONG

CHORUS

What would the Army do without the Engineers?
Can anyone tell me what they would do?

The Infantry may brag and boast
About their many feats
But who is it that stays behind
To cover their retreats?

The Infantry may call
The Engineers a total loss
But if we didn't build those bridges
How would they get across?

If you want a bridge built now
Or a map to make things clear
Where the hell you gonna get em
Without an Engineer?

If you want a road built now
You can bet your shirt
Nobody but an Engineer
Will ever move the dirt.

The Axis, they may brag and boast
Of the world they are gonna get
Until they've met the Engineers
They ain't seen nothing yet.

If you see a Jap invader
Trembling with fear
What the hell is he frightened of
But a Combat Engineer?

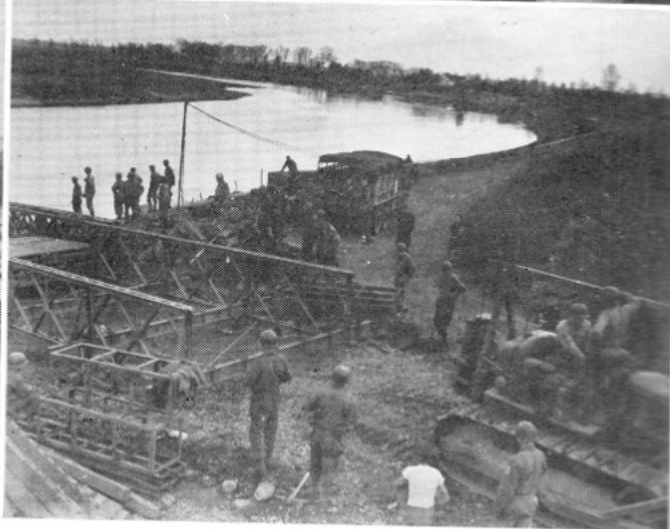
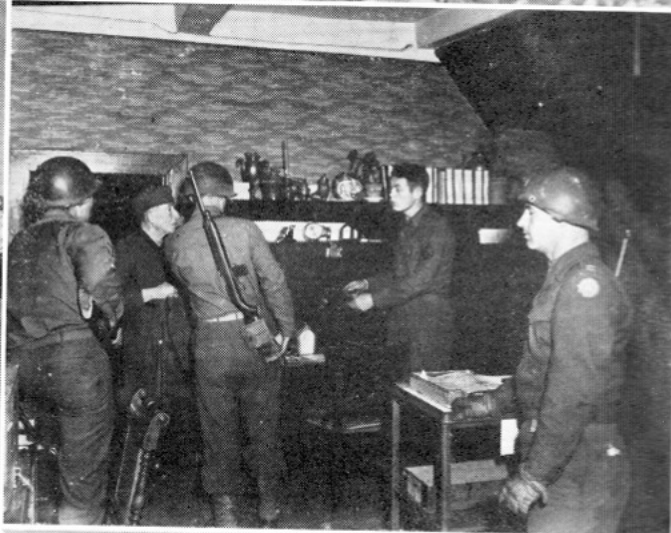
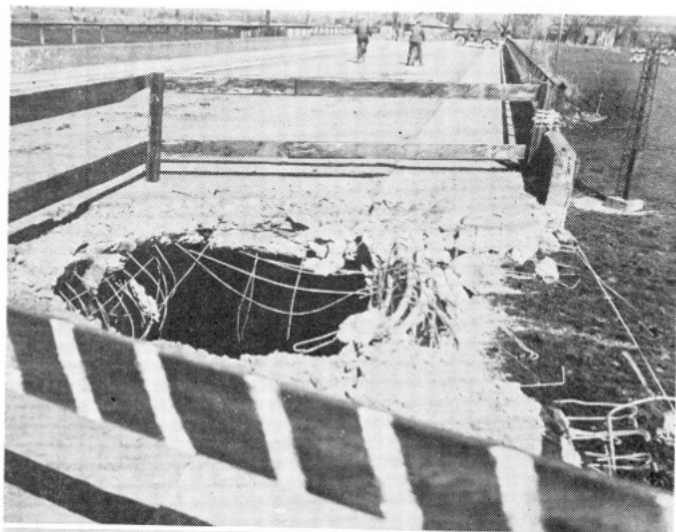
And if you see an aviator
Crying in his beer
You'll know that his girl ran off
With a Combat Engineer.

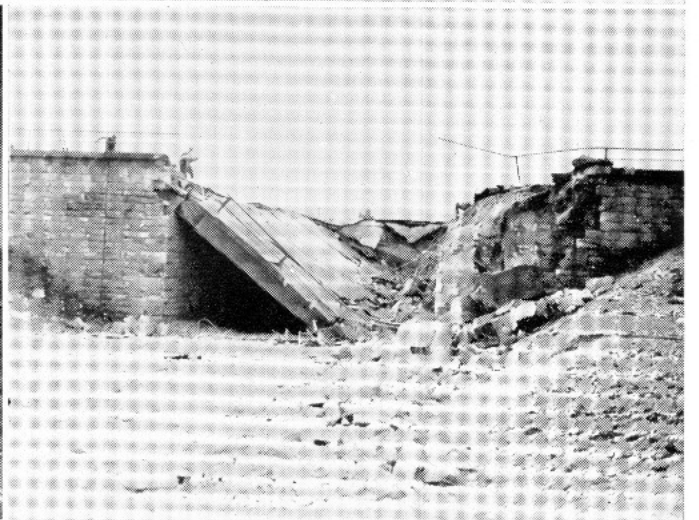
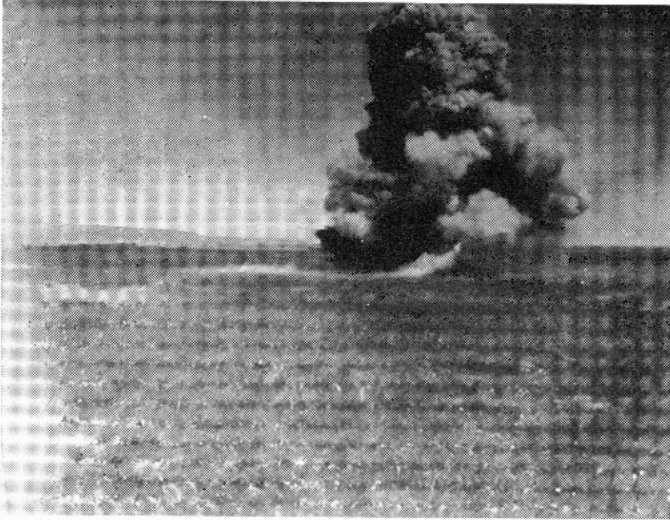
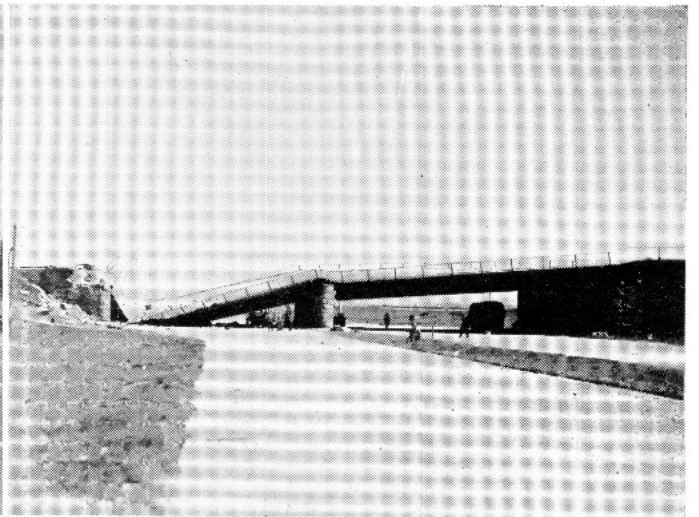
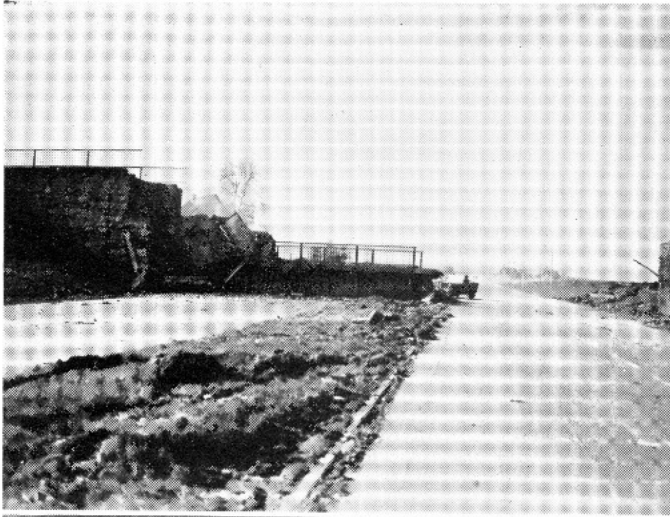
At any little party
Where there are lots of girls and beer
Look under any table
And you'll find an Engineer.

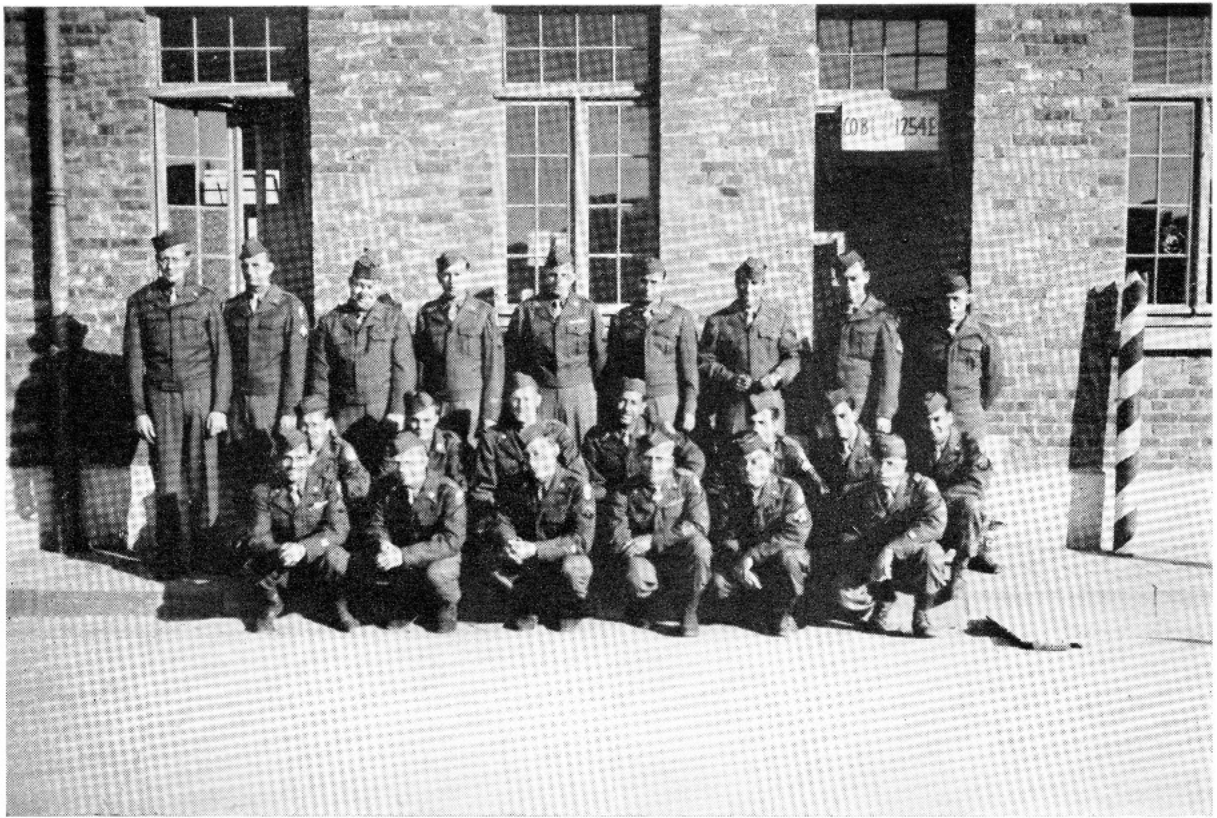
At any railroad station
You'll find many a girl in tears
Ninety-nine and a half percent
Are shed for Engineers.

(CHORUS SLOWLY)

What would the Army do without the Engineers?
Can anyone tell me what they would do?







HEADQUARTERS PLATOON, COMPANY B

R. Peterson, J. Long, A. A. Vande Kerr, J. Fischer, J. L. Bowman, J. Arsenault, R. Villalobos, B. W. Gilley
Brown,

C. N. Bdasious, L. A. Rasmussen, White, F. Gonzales, _____, A. J. Costello, D. Greenspan
E. L. Martini, W. Gotner, E. R. Wiseman, S. Carlson, J. Gotthelf, R. W. Ulrich

SNAFU PLUS

There is absolutely no doubt that every soldier in this man's army knows the meaning of the word "snafu", but men of Company "B" think of "snafu" plus when they recall certain incidents which happened in Roermond, Holland.

The company was in Kaldenkirchen, Germany, the night it was alerted. There was plenty of cursing when those beerglasses were relinquished. The trucks were loaded that night and the next morning the company shoved off to Roermond where it was installed in an old museum with forty thousand dollars worth of paintings for wall paper. Some joint.

The problem confronting us was this. We were to build a fixed timber trestle bridge where two Baileys, a class 40 and a class 70 stood. The officers stewed more than a little trying to decide the course of action. When it was determined that the timber trestle bridge could not be built between the Baileys, it was decided to tear down the class 70, reinforce the class 40 to 70 and then build the timber trestle bridge. Our problems

seemed settled.

But then came the blitz for Lt. Campbell of the Third Platoon. The latest poop from group "assigned to him to a road job" and after a detailed reconnaissance he returned to learn that a Bailey bridge job confronted him instead. That meant another reconnaissance. He returned from that, grabbed a bite and headed out of town with his trucks to pick up bridge parts at a depot. The convoy returned in the wee hours of the morning and grabbed a few minutes of sleep to be awakened and informed that all work was cancelled and we were ordered to Beckum, Germany.

That meant returning the parts and dashing back to Kaldenkirchen for the long trek ahead. That's why the Lieutenant will never forgive group, and that's why he sat and barked all night at his sleepy peep driver, Tec. 5 Walter C. Vincent, trying to keep Vincent and himself awake. And that is why we call the whole deal—snafu plus!



LT. SERGIO L. CASCIANO
Administrative Officer

RHINE CROSSING

The 1254th was in Maastricht when the Rhine was crossed, but three members of "B" Company were there to take in the whole show. To Pfc. Coy Burnett, Pvt's. William Reeves and William Wright fell the fate of being attached to the 139th Airborne to drive prime movers loaded with mines and demolitions and haul D-4 bulldozers to the front.

Three days before the Yanks pushed across the men moved up with their trucks and established themselves in a factory three miles from Wese. There they waited for the signal to send them across.

They watched tensely as C-47's roared overhead towing gliders which would suddenly cut loose and dip earthward flying wing to wing. Paratroopers sailed earthward on their daring mission. German ack-ack filled the skies with flak and before their eyes they saw transports get hit and plunge to their destruction. Shrapnel splattered the areas of the factory.

It was while Burnett was fixing a tire that he

received his greatest fright. A C-47 was hit and spun crazily downward to make a direct hit on an American ammunition dump. There was a tremendous roar as it blew up and Burnett was inspired to make a glorious dive under his truck as a shell hit the wall of a brick building ten feet from him. Luck was with him for the shell failed to explode.

There were some tense moments when the convoy moved across the river on the treadway bridge that Sunday night. The convoy was split and part of it moved down a roadway toward a bridge which was knocked out. Half way across the bridge a D-4 decided to roll off its trailer and there was plenty of excitement until it was loaded again. Snipers did not help operations either, but finally they moved across into Wesel which was lighting the dark sky with the fire of its burnings.

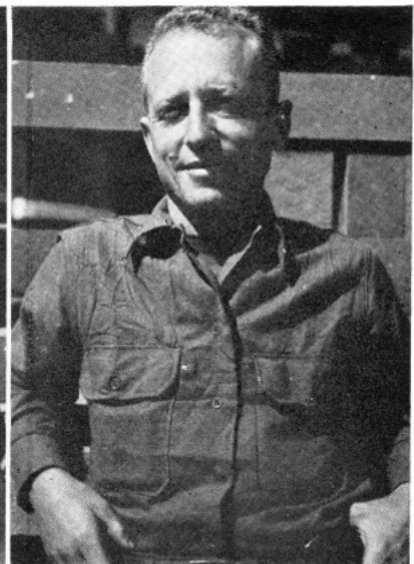
Soldiers always seem reluctant to reveal their true emotions, for when asked what they thought of the action, they had but one thing to say,—“it was fun”.



S/SGT. EDDIE RABAGO

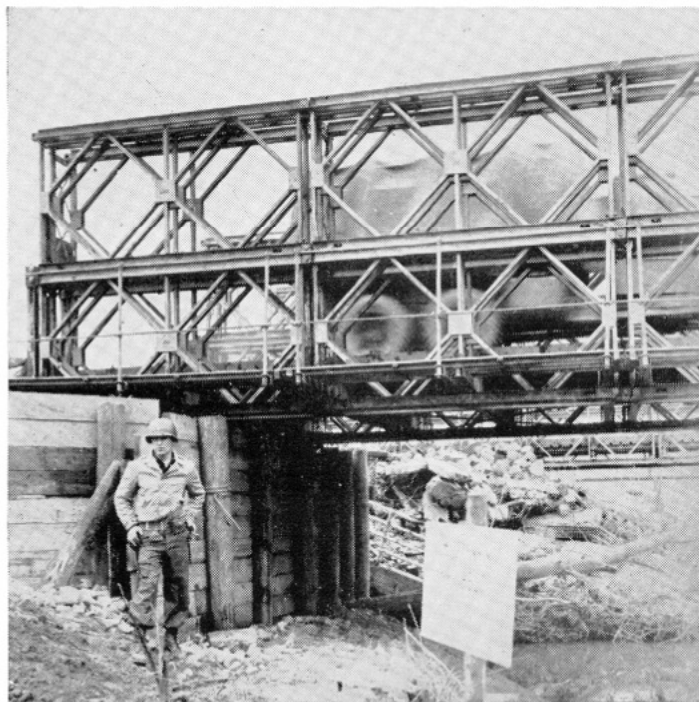


SGT. CHARLES H. WORKMAN

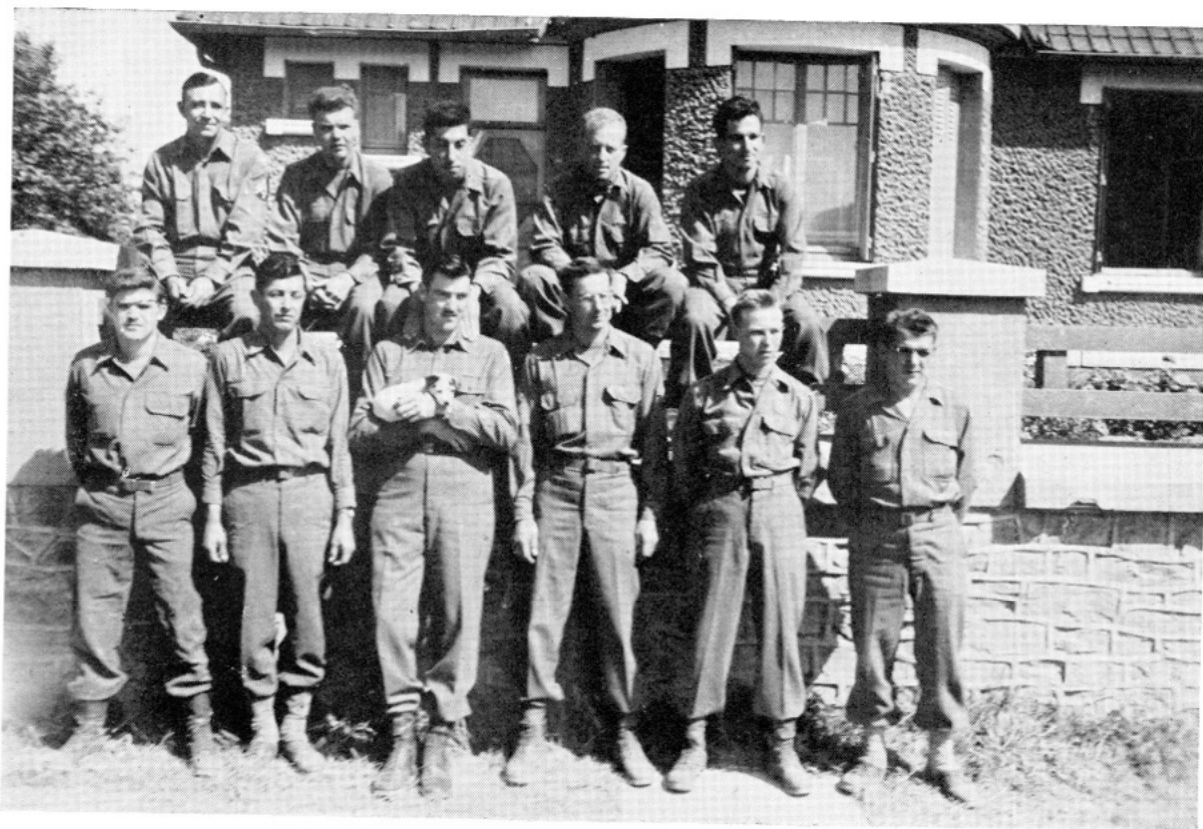


SGT. BOB ALEXANDER

FIRST PLATOON "B" COMPANY



LT. LEONARD V. RASCOE



MEN OF 1ST SQUAD, 1ST PLATOON, COMPANY B

E. Paty, J. Kelly, S. Hersch, B. Alexander, N. Pinski
J. Huff, C. Gonzalez, V. Maule, F. Calkins, G. Lucas, S. Jusezczak

SNIPERS

It happened at Nord Dinker, Germany the very day we pulled into the town, April 1945. Pvt. Robert H. Jones of New, Washington, and Pvt. Charles D. Wallace of Paducah, Kentucky and decided that afternoon to shake the kinks of the recent ride out of their legs by a stroll down an apparently peaceful country lane. Engaged in casual conversation, the men walked along the road a few feet apart, M-1's slung on their shoulders.

But suddenly that peace was shattered by a single shot which kicked up the dirt between them. Acting as a man they dived headlong into a ditch while succeeding shots beat a tattoo on a telephone pole and bank immediately over their heads.

By then Jones and Wallace had unlimbered their rifles, and in the ensuing duel emptied four clips at two women and a man who saw fit to duck around the corner of a brick building and fire a total of nine rounds at them.

One of two cyclists, who had sought cover at Jones, shout of warning, gained the courage after the exchange had ceased to mount his motorcycle and go roaring down the road for reinforcements which arrived in the form of a Platoon of "C" Company. A skirmish line swept across the fields to no avail while searching parties failed to find any clue in the surrounding houses. The mysterious assailants had vanished as if into thin air.



MEN OF 2ND SQUAD, 1ST PLATOON, COMPANY B

H. Fitzimmons, E. Snell, M. Hall, W. Rowe

B. Benbenek, D. Hopper, J. Laona, O. Jarrett, H. Spade, J. Mikita, R. Benton, J. Arnold

KAMERAD

The Third Platoon of "B" Company was engaged in blowing up the wreckage of a bridge the Jerries had left behind when a Pole came pedalling down the road like a madman. Bringing his bicycle to a screeching halt, he burst into a stream of Polish which registered on no one until Pfc. Matthew Piotrowski came to the rescue. He listened a moment and then exclaimed, "Krauts! Three of them in a farm house down the road."

"Okay," said Lt. James Campbell, "I want seven volunteers to load up in truck 33." There was a mad rush and a few seconds later the entire platoon was mounting the vehicle.

"Everybody off, dammit!" yelled the Lieutenant, who then proceeded to select the men while the rest reluctantly returned to work. The Kraut hunters picked were: Pfc. Matthew Piotrowski, Tec. 5 Angelo Cerminara, Tec. 5 Jesse Perdue, Pvt. William Forner, Pvt. Charles Wallace, Pvt. Aulden Pickard and Pvt. Zebedee Jackson. In addition there were Pfc. Joseph

Duck, driver of the truck, Tec. 5 Walter Vincent, Jeep driver, Sgt. Robert Lindvall, interpreter, and Lt. Campbell, leader of the expedition.

In a few minutes the vehicle pulled up to a row of cottages where the Germans were alleged to be hiding and the men piled out, eyes peeled and rifles ready. Rounding the last cottage, Piotrowski let out a yell, for crouched down by the building were the three Jerries. They scrambled to their feet, arms over their heads, and upon questioning admitted they were soldiers who had donned civilian clothes in an effort to escape.

A search through their clothes brought out a mass of identification papers including an invitation from General "IKE" to surrender themselves to American forces. Very subdued were these members of the once mighty Wehrmacht. They meekly climbed into the truck and that night three more "Supermen" were peering out of the PW Cage at Hildesheim, Germany.



MEN OF 3RD SQUAD, 1ST PLATOON, COMPANY B

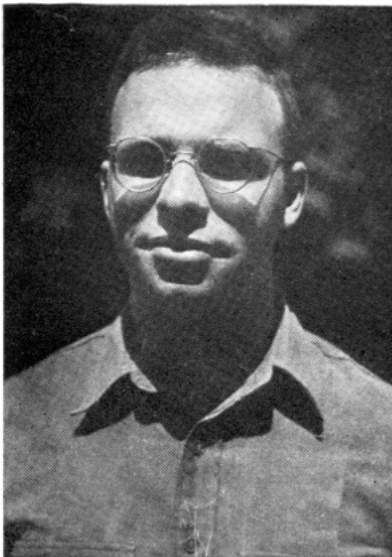
J. Pope, J. Plotar, M. Reyes, L. Frederick, Ward, J. J. Noakes

C. Bradshaw, H. Belkowski, L. Warnick, M. Frink, C. Workman

CEMENTING BY THE THIRD

Although German-American relationships were anything but friendly at the time, there was something "cemented" between them. That was the hole in the Autobahn just outside of Kamen, Germany, when the Third Platoon of "B" Company under 1st Lt. Campbell was assigned to patch a hole blown by a bomb in a railroad overpass. The downward pressure of the blast had caused the steel rod reinforcements to break, while cement was strewn about underneath. Under the direct supervision of S/Sgt. Bringe, the rods were heated, bent horizontal, and welded together. A wooden flooring was

set in by Tec. 4 Courtney aided by Cpl. Adams, Pfc. Test and Tec. 4 Kusick. Since no mixer was available, the cement had to be hand turned, the process consuming 90 bags of cement, six hours of aggregate and an equal amount of sand. Due to the time pressure imposed by the necessity of using the superhighway, to get supplies to the troops then crushing the Ruhr pocket, the platoon along with others building "Catfish" Baileys, worked late into the night until the job was completed. It is now rumored from competent sources that the patch alone will stand as a monument to the ability of the Third, long after the rest of the overpass is worn away.



SGT. RICHARD OSTRANDER

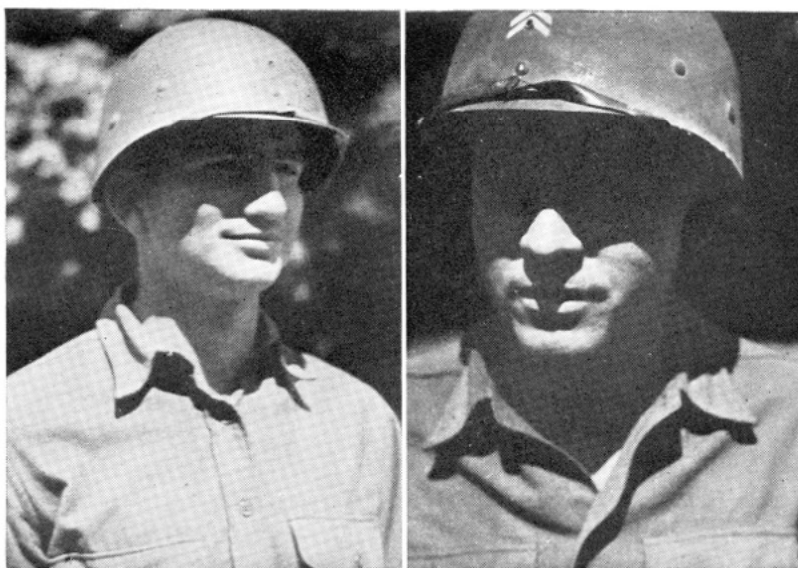


LT. RIDGE L. SCOTT



S/SGT. ZENNO GILL

SECOND PLATOON "B" COMPANY



SGT. RICHARD HARDING



MEN OF 1ST SQUAD, 2ND PLATOON, COMPANY B
 G. Vangordon, Benson, J. Rinaldo, A. Winford
 Browning, L. Files, Meniel, S. Bowers, R. Nadeau, T. Cabell,
 N. Numis, C. Cosney, W. Bartlett

HISTORY 2nd PLATOON

The 2nd platoon of "B" Company is a platoon of traditions, pride, and enough of the old p and v spirit to get any job done, whether it be cleaning streets in Hildesheim, Germany, or building one of the first dual carriage Bailey Bridges on the famed Autobahn.

We're all old buddies in the platoon, and we're damned proud that we've been together so long. Lt. Scott, our platoon leader, has been with his boys longer than any platoon leader in the battalion. Many of the fellows have been in the 2nd platoon since the activation of the outfit way back there in December of 1943. That was back at Camp Cooke, California; then at Camp Livingston, Louisiana a swell bunch of fellows joined us from Camp Reynolds, Pa. The last set of fellows to join us signed up while we were in Maastricht, Holland.

We call ourselves "The Joker Platoon" and each true Joker carries his Joker card and knows by heart the parody Bowers made up at Camp Westhill on the "Aggie Hymn."

"We are the Jokers"

We are the Jokers, the Jokers are we,
 True to each other, as Jokers can be.

You've got to fight boys, you've got to fight
 You've got to fight for the Jokers Platoon!

And when it's over, then all of the rest,
 They will come to join the best.
 We are the Jokers, the Jokers are we
 We're the Second Platoon of Company "B".

Sgt. "Swick" Harding, squad leader of the first squad, being a former "Aggie" thought the parody strictly sacrilege when the song first came out, but I think he's pretty fond of the Joker song himself, now that it has become a symbol of the platoon.

We still have a good laugh at the boys who said time and time again, "This outfit will never go overseas." That rumor started back at Camp Livingston and ended aboard "H.M.S. Tamaroa". Camp Kilmer was our P.O.E., and that's where we were calling ourselves "The Gas House Gang." If you are in doubt, see Sgt. Gill, our platoon sergeant, about those nights, where men were men and Yankee beer was just another phrase for "what a night!"

That was some boat ride, eh, boys? And that English chow—who can forget the cry, "Two



MEN OF 2ND SQUAD, 2ND PLATOON, COMPANY B

Almark, L. Munson, R. Clark, E. Bedowski, Z. Gill, W. Flanagan, J. Rakes
B. Irving, G. Inglehart, R. Turnquist, E. Bailey
M. Leder

deeps! Two flats!" We just existed from day to day, downing chocolate, using tomato juice for a chaser. The fish in the Atlantic saw a lot of English chow, but after one meal they were no longer on our stern. Wonder why?

The guys won't forget the fun we've had since we've been over. Remember good old Wincanton, boy? How about the pubs—we all had our favorite—"Georges", "New Inn", "Red Lion", "White Horse", "The Dolphin", "Railway Inn", "The Bear", "Uncle Tom's". Cider wasn't the only attraction the pubs had, either. There was Wincanton's own "Cafe Society" with such prominent figures as Miss Gummy and Miss Toothless. (Don't turn your heads, boys—they meant no harm.)

And how about our big dances? That "Hokey Pokey!"

Then there was the quiet Christmas season at Camp Westhill when every man and his brother took it upon himself to prove that *there's no excuse* (get that Brownie?) for rolling a barrel of cider up a hill unless you intend to drink it. Some drank, some sang, some couldn't find the latrine in time. Some used steel helmets. Others made the back door. What a season! Christmas was never like this!

Who'll forget the terrible battle of Red Lynch? Almost every day for two weeks we stormed the rugged slope, captured the hay stacks, and put out security, but always the unseen enemy would retake the hill in the night. One evening the enemy was more realistic than usual, and that was no bull, or was it? Sgt. Gill, Hallmark, Ulrich, and most of the 2nd squad said it was bull, and a big brute at that. The bull charged the boys, the boys fired blanks, the bull hesitated, then charged again, and the boys made a strategic withdrawal over a hedge. Then Sgt. Gill, who looked closer at the *beast* to make certain Sgt. Ostrander wasn't around, threw a firecracker under the rump roast, and the bull "pulled steaks" (Get that pun, Numis?). The guys completed the charge up the hill with fixed bayonets. I think they made a detour too.

Most of us will agree the roughest that the 2nd platoon has had it was at Bailey Bridge School at Wallingford. They call it school, but all we learned there was that a Bailey is a lot of back-breaking work.

Then we hit Camp Twenty Grand in France, after experiencing the Channel Crossing on LCI's and LST's. The driver who made it on LST's were lucky—they kept their food down.



MEN OF 3RD SQUAD, 2ND PLATOON, COMPANY B

C. Vollmer, C. Francisco, T. Ham, J. Leger
 J. Howard, C. McCune, S. Puchala, J. Egyad, T. Courter
 B. Wilkes, R. Ostrander, J. Kalindowski, H. Rolf
 Jacobs, H. Vandyne

Aboard the LCI 10 in 1 rations were leaving the boat much faster than they had been put aboard. Just ask Cabell to give you his opinion of the 10 in 1's!!!

Twenty Grand meant just another week of sweating out the real thing. Then we moved to the oldest town in Holland, Maastricht, where we'll all think of "Mary's Dump". We didn't mind the work so much, but some of us were certainly p.o.'d about waiting for chow. That's when we brought out this parody on "School Days".

Ignatz, Ignatz,
 Powdered eggs by Ignatz.
 Oatmeal and pancakes served right on time,
 He doesn't care if you stand in line.
 He is so proud when he serves chow,
 Gee, but I wish I was home now!
 I'd stick those darn eggs up his bow-wow-wow!
 When we were in Company "B".

No hard feelings, Bob; everybody gripes about chow if he's human.

Some of the boys got rich in Maastricht, always, it seemed, after a reconnaissance into Germany. But our boys wouldn't loot from the

Deutschland, *did* we?

This writer has a soft spot in his heart for Maastricht—the swell Red Cross dances, lots of coffee and donuts, and that copy of the drug-store back home, "The Sugar Bowl" where we got our first ice cream since we left the States. Tasted just like that made back home, too.

After "Mary's Dump" was moved up for the Rhine River crossing it wasn't long before we moved across the border into Germany. At Kaltenkirchen we put up some signs, "Entering Germany—Do Not Fraternize With Germans." Of course we didn't know how to fraternize—not then, but we soon learned what the word meant. Seems as though it was pretty expensive too—\$65 a crack, I believe.

And how about running an all night race in total blackout up through a 15 mile gap in the Ruhr Pocket? Someone said a wrong turn and 7 miles either way and we would have Heinies all over us. Guess we're lucky, because we made our destination, Beckum, okay. Some of the boys were shaken up a bit when their truck turned over on its side, but 'twas nothing at all. Beckum had been taken by the 95th Division spearhead only two days before we arrived, so we figured

we would have to be plenty careful, but after looking things over the situation was peaceful enough. Man, we'll never forget seeing truckload after truckload of German prisoners being rushed to the rear. They moved over the roads we were repairing, but that job didn't last long. Beckum was only the beginning of a series of moves that took us through Nordinker, Altenboogie, and finally Hildesheim. I think we'll remember Nordinker for the abundance of spirit, or should I say spirits? And while we stayed there only a couple of days we had plenty of fun. The farmhouse the 2nd platoon occupied proved what efficient farmers the Germans were. When we cleaned the place out to make room for our cots and duffle bags, we moved enough food for half the German Army. Talk about food shortage—bull! They were eating well enough. It irritated us to have to handle the stuff with kid gloves, too, but that's only the army.

The 95th Division was pushing the Germans caught in the Ruhr Pocket down the Autobahn towards Hamm, and Jerry was blocking the way as much as possible by blowing bridges and overpasses. We were attached to the 95th at the time, so the boys had plenty of demolition work to do, clearing the obstacles. The 2nd platoon alone cleared two road blocks, using thousands of pounds of TNT and captured dynamite. Eliot, of Hdqs Platoon, certainly gave us a swell demonstration with his dozer when he pushed the twisted girders out of the road. We

weren't far from the front lines then—our artillery behind us blasting the retreating Germans out of Cammen, about a mile and a half to our left front. It's a wonder our artillery didn't draw return fire, but that was some more luck.

On the same road, we built one of the first dual-carriage Bailey's ever constructed. We did most of the work at night, and more than once we thought Jerry had spotted us and was going to give us hell, but we turned off the jeep lights (which was all we were using to work by) and kept quiet each time he came over. Jerry circled directly overhead a couple of times, but finally went on.

After the Bailey was finished we moved again to Hildesheim, Battalion Hdqs. was in town, but "B" Company set up at the airport just outside town. Our big job there was to get the former Luftwaffe barracks into shape for former PW's who were being flown in C47's to France and England. The war ended about the same time we finished the job.

Then the whole battalion moved to a big factory on the outskirts of Hildesheim. We had "boo-koo" fun there, even if we couldn't speak Russian or Polish too well. Then there was the big party on the hill, where most everyone was sober enough to play ball, but woozy enough to have plenty of trouble hitting the old apple.

Not long after this the rumors came in about a big move, and sure enough; late in May we pulled out of Germany.

THIRD PLATOON "B" COMPANY

SGT. ALBERT J. DAIGLE



LT. JAMES G. CAMPBELL



SGT. ROBT. LINDVALL





MEN OF 2ND SQUAD, 3RD PLATOON, COMPANY B

C. Burnett, M. Piotrowski, R. Lindvall, J. Perdue, Adams, S. Kusick
G. Hedrick, C. Test, D. Greenspan, A. Gunn, C. Reynolds, J. Demarast

OLE KAINTUCK

Lt. James G. Campbell, leader of the Third Platoon of Company "B", gained added popularity for his already popular self when he divulged this tale one day.

It seems that while the Lieutenant was at Camp Van Dorn, Miss., he was in line for a three or four day pass depending on whether he travelled to Kentucky or Ohio. Now the Lieutenant, although his home is in Dunraven, Kentucky is as human as the rest of us and, naturally enough, asked for four days.

But, as is always the case, there was that sharp eyed "Looney" in the Adjutant's office who was determined to limit our hero to three days. He reached for the telephone and called

the Sergeant-Major of the Lieutenant's battalion.

"Sergeant", he began abruptly, "Who is this Lt. Campbell and why must he have four days to get to Kentucky"?

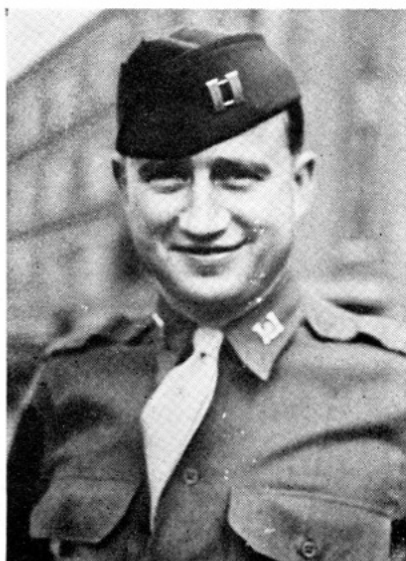
There was a slight pause before the Sergeant's quick wits came to his rescue.

"Sir", he replied, "Lt. Campbell takes a train to Cincinnati, transfers there to Winchester, Ky. and is then forced to journey the last 100 miles on a mule."

A lengthier pause ensued on the other end of the line this time before a mild, bewildered voice answered, "Oh—I see. Thank you".

And, believe it or not, when the pass was delivered it was for four days.

[illegible]



CAPT. GERALD E. AUTRY

"C" COMPANY History

A true story of the birth, youth and maturity of one company of Engineers. We begin with the birth since we are unable to find anyone who will admit having conceived the organization. Youth follows after some delay (common childhood diseases) and we soon find the "Company" a mature organization, ready to carry out any assignment it is given. This is the story of one Company of Engineers, the story of a company as singular and outstanding as "Catfish 1254" is among other Engineer Battalions.

By SERGEANT REUBEN W. KAEHLER

**Company "C" born Dec. 15, 1943
deceased—**

Here lies dear old "C" Company,
Queen of 1254.
Let's strike up just one symphony,
For this leader in the war.
"C" Company has meant a lot to me,
Because of that I'll always see,
That even though she's underground,
She'll rise again, just to be crowned—
Queen of 1254.

NAISSANCE—A word we are later to learn
(en francais) means birth.

Summer, winter, spring or fall,—full moon,
new moon or sun spots; If Venus showed only
two of her four moons, or if Plaris was ap-
proaching upper or lower (?); Nothing, abso-
lutely nothing affected the climate of Camp Cooke,
California. Day after day a sharp, chilling wind

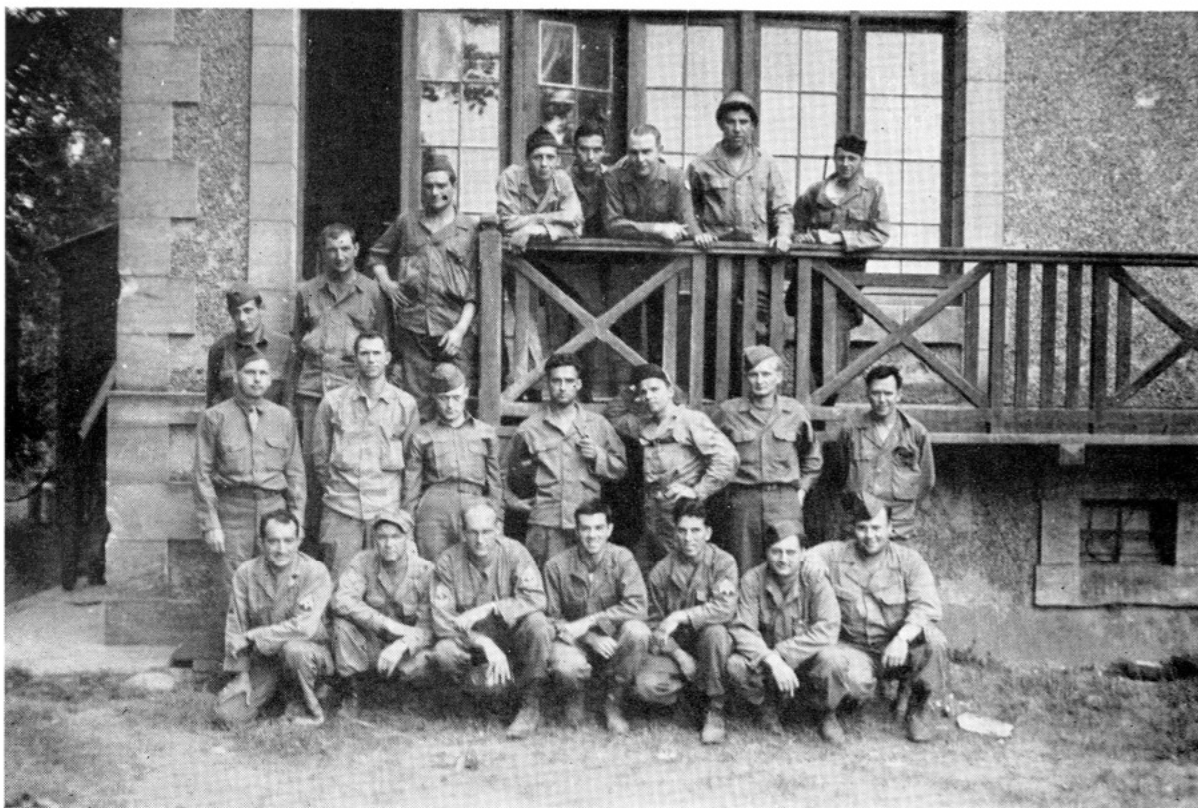
blew, carrying with it tons of dust. On days
when there was no dust accompanying the wind,
the rain took its place. In both cases either an
overcoat or its equivalent in sweaters (wool
knit) or Jacket Field, ML, was necessary. Quar-
ters for troops were poorly constructed, inade-
quate and very undesirable in every respect.

It was in this setting, on the 15th of December
nineteen hundred and forty three, that the 1254
Engineer Battalion was born. Company "C" was
one of the Battalion's component parts. Obvious-
ly for an organization to exist under the above
conditions, it had to be composed of strong
men. Strong men they were, this nucleus of Com-
pany "C", the cadre. Many of these men had
served on the "Alcan Highway." They were
Engineers of the rough and ready variety. They
knew no hardships that could compare with
those of the "ROAD."

Company "C" was originally commanded by
Lt. Wallace. Riely was the first soldier, who was
later transferred to "B" Company. Berlin took
over from Riely. Other notables of the cadre
were, Marsh (Smiling Ed) who was and still
is, Roger's, who still is, Ashjeld in the motor
pool, Baltrenas, Moccadine, the unforgettable
maudlin and (bare facts) York. After about
six weeks a few men arrived from several insti-
tutions of higher learning. (Put back your serv-
ice flag, Mother.) Thus the company began to
round out into a group of instructors special-
ized to teach the men who were about to come
in. "J" area was selected as our training site,
an area that will long be remembered. There
were great discussions as to which the Lord
made first, "J" area or "No Man's Land."

In April of 1944 men began to pour in from
many parts of the country. Former Infantry,
Field Artillery, Ordnance, and A. A. A. men,
rather unwillingly became "ENGINEERS." (I
want a transfer.) Finally late in April we be-
gan our Engineer Basic Training. We plunged
into a conglomeration of close order drill, classes,
night problems, and inspections. All in all we
became very attached to "J" area, and to the
poison oak which rested in her bosom and on
some of ours!

In May training was interrupted by prepara-
tions for change of station. Many long hours
were spent packing, crating, and loading, while
fleeting last moments were spent at our former
week-end haunts, which ranged from the fog of
San Francisco, to that certain square in L. A.
On the 27th of the month we boarded the "G. I.
Streamliner"—a troop sleeper. Someone once
wrote of having "A touch of Texas in his heart."
But the men of 1254 can boast of a portion of



HEADQUARTERS PLATOON, COMPANY C

G. Grenrock, J. Gatton, Wallen, Olson, A. Chiabay, S. Wolfenden, D. Penz, Garcia
M. Johnson, S. Safranek, M. Marsh, D. Martinez, K. Bettley, C. Sokol, H. Loeffler
B. Zaccardo, R. Barnes, J. Grick, J. Wedler, B. Bourriague, M. Sophier, A. Anderson

Arizona, New Mexico, and Louisiana as well.

Our new home, Camp Livingston, with its incessant heat, and "beaucoups" moisture, was an ample equal to Camp Cooke's dust and wind. East is East and West is West, but a G. I. gripes anywhere. For the next five months our sweaters (wool knit), and jackets, field, M1, were at the bottom of our respective foot lockers. Basic training was resumed and completed with its usual hikes, rifle marksmanship, and bivouacs. Fishing basic we began individual, and unit training. The Company has been born, weaned, and now passes into the "awkward youth" stage.

It was at this point that many of the old hands left us as a cadre for a new Engineer unit. First Sergeant Berlin, S/Sgt. (I'll wrap this rifle around your neck) Winters, S/Sgt. Ashjeld of the motor pool, S/Sgt. Baltrenas, Sgt. Moccandine, Sgt. Deardorff (with two F's, Sir), and several others whose names escape us, "par-teed." This mass migration of rank caused more shoe polish to be consumed, many a blitz cloth blackened, and a great usage of the word "Sir."

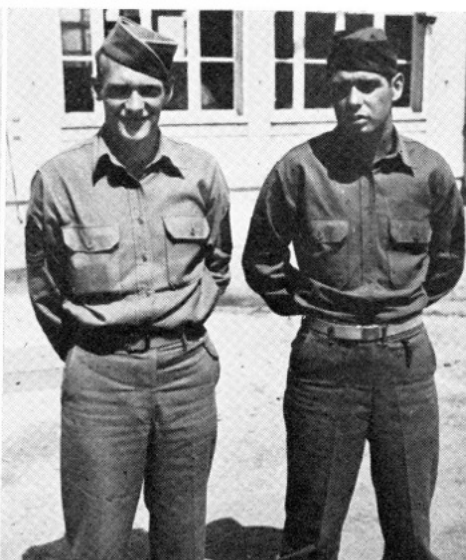
Unit training proved to be more interesting than the basic, which most of us had previously endured. We did not live as close to the book and things were accomplished by individual units, such as the platoon, and the squad. This unit training ended with a five day "excursion," into the wild forests of Louisiana. The problems, consisted of digging defense positions, live firing, constructing road blocks, and bridge demolition. However, it would have been wiser to spend our time building an ark, as each day found us becoming more and more amphibious in character.

We now advanced into an era of individual specialized training. The NCO's went reconnoitering. Bridge carpenters, Riggers, Jack Hammer Operators, and demolition men were born overnight. For a time many of those FM—which Sokol had so carefully preserved—were found in hip pockets, and latrine two by four's.

The latter part of September brought us a series of "Grape-vine" rumors which led to an eventual notification that the unit was going overseas. "But this outfit can't go overseas, re-



SGT. HENRY COLBY



SGT. JOHN CRIEK (left)



SGT. CHARLES WORKMAN

member?" During the next month, we were subjected to examinations, check ups, and overseas instructions. One would be surprised at the number of maladies a man can develop in such a short time. Most of the men received fifteen day furloughs. Kess Ka Say, furlough? At the end of this time, the motor pool became our second home as we spent twenty four hours a day packing, crating, and loading. Number 9945V was the byword, and it was Tec 4 Anderson and Cpl. Hudson who worked so diligently at this time to make sure that the crates, tags, and shipping lists were in order. It was at this time that our dwindling ranks were filled with new blood from Ft. Belvoir, Virginia; Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri; and Camp Reynolds, Pennsylvania. At first most of these men seemed like intruders or strangers, but we were soon to learn that they were as much an integral part of the company as we ourselves.

No sooner has our preparations been completed, than on the 14th of October we bade farewell to Camp Livingston. We looked forward to our future stay at the Port of Embarkation, and what lay beyond, with nervous anticipation.

It was rather an uneventful journey to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, our P.O.E. There were the usual rumors, guardhouse lawyers had their say, and African dominoes bounced merrily off the latrine door. Several men were tempted to join the unit at a later date as the train passed through familiar territory. (Are you listening, Carter?)

We spent the next five days at this station hurriedly going through the usual processing. There were the boat drills, clothing checks, and rough,

rough (?) physicals. Lectures on security and censorship brought us nearer the realization that "This was it!" We were going overseas. Then began a period of "sweating" for many of the New York boys, as we left Camp Kilmer and proceeded through New York to board the HMS Tamoroa.

48—49—50———!!!

Our hopes were high as we boarded that "Limey Scow." Indeed a memorable day, and an unforgettable voyage. For twelve days we zig-zagged across the Atlantic. Due to our "close" quarters, this happy lot soon made fast friends with galleys, floors, tables, and one another's big feet protruding from hammocks. (The art of collapsing one's bone structure in a hammock was a subject left uncovered by all Field Manuals.) Here and now we pay humble tribute to those of our fellow comrades and sufferers, who so valiantly held on—to the rail—for twelve days, on the most nourishing diet of marmalade and sausage. Because of the crowded conditions only two "meals" per day were served. (Two deers and a flat.) Many a blurred eye, and bearded face eagerly tracked the seagull's which hovered just out of reach. Even "C" Company with its youth became weary. Tomato juice and hershey bars bought at the ship's PX helped stave off what seemed like slow starvation, and, "These men against the sea," bought great quantities. Time was heavy on our hands, and more and more everyone realized that as the ship's wake grew longer, so did the distance increase between us and our loved ones. Strange country, people, customs, and an enemy which had conquered so many, lay ahead. Not exactly a gruesome thought, but awe-inspiring.



MEN OF 1ST SQUAD, 1ST PLATOON, COMPANY C

J. Julien, E. Brush, R. Houck, C. Pitkin

R. Plowman, J. Morales, G. Revis

T. Carenas, J. Goodbalian, E. Bergia, Wright

MEN OF 2ND SQUAD, 1ST PLATOON, COMPANY C

O. Holt, Wolfe, H. Staples, W. Scruggs, D. Merwin, L. Erbrecht, A. Woznicks

H. Roesch, W. Wyatt, Watson, R. Philleo, P. Anderson, W. Nickens





3RD SQUAD, 1ST PLATOON, COMPANY C
SGT. COLBY'S SQUAD

We reached our Port, Avonmouth, near Bristol, England on November the 3rd, and after a delay of twenty-four hours, debarked. The men smiled and poked fun at the British Railroad system, which seemed more like a bunch of Toonerville trolleys strung together. The engine seemed to be laboring and was unable to attain any great speed. Our first glimpse of bombed cities rought us nearer the realization that "Jerry had been here." A proud and cocky lot were these English as they described to us the blitz wrought by the Luftwaffe. In contrast to the bombed cities, the thatched roofs and neat brick homes of the smaller towns were both new and picturesque. The eighty mile trip southward to Wincanton, in Somerset, must have been an impressing sight, but held little interest for the tired, dirty travelers that we were.

(3)

SOMEBODY SPILLED THEIR GUTS!!!

Our company was billeted on an estate near Bruton, England, about three miles from Wincanton. Redlynch estate, owned by the Earl of Suffolk, was a veritable paradise after his majesty's ship. Our quarters were Nesson huts, complete with ventilation which wasn't comforting,

considering the approaching winter. It was the common opinion, however, that a foxhole would be even more ventilated, so there was little griping. While recuperating we made a reconnaissance of the sleepy little English village about a mile away. The streets were very narrow and winding. The men were all carrying flashlights the second time into town. They attributed the bruises on their face to the darkness which had caused them to run into buildings, and every other conceivable object on the way back to the estate. But it couldn't have gotten that dark, could it? Nonetheless we found the village quite to our liking. Entertainment was limited to weekly dances, and visiting the well known English "Pub." The Pubs, with good English beer and the ever present dart board, became a constant companion those long wintry evenings. About our only vivid memory of the weekly dance is the "Hokey Cokey," which continues to be a favorite at every party.

Shortly thereafter we resumed training. Mines, firing devices, and booby traps had first priority. Lt. Lathrop and T/5 Nolan attended a Mine and Booby Trap school in France. Their newly acquired technical knowledge of mines, plus



SGT. DANIEL DORSEY



SGT. G. W. GAYDOS



S/SGT. WILLIAM B. KERSLAKE

father to son advance on how to handle the French "Mademoiselle," meant hour after hour of classes.

Runstedt's offensive changed the complexion of things as we were alerted, and forced bodily into an Infantry training schedule. Redlynch became a fortress and we were forever trying to reduce it. Other headlights of our training in England included two uncomfortable trips to Wallingford, England, for practical work in Bailey Bridge construction. Valuable experience was gained and put to good use later in Germany. We must now consider "C" Company as of age. Why? It says right here on the Colonel's desk. Catfish Bn. ready for combat!

Upon completion of our training we prepared (secretly) to cross to the continent. After the customary dry run, we finally left on the 23rd of February for RCRPD-6 Piddlehinton, England, where we enjoyed "C" rations and the aged movie, "Tarzan and the Apes." Here our vehicles were staged and sent on to cross the channel on separate LST's, while we were transported to Weymouth by British vehicles. The channel was very quiet on the way over making our short trip pleasant.

(4)

ON THE CONTINENT (Com Bien)

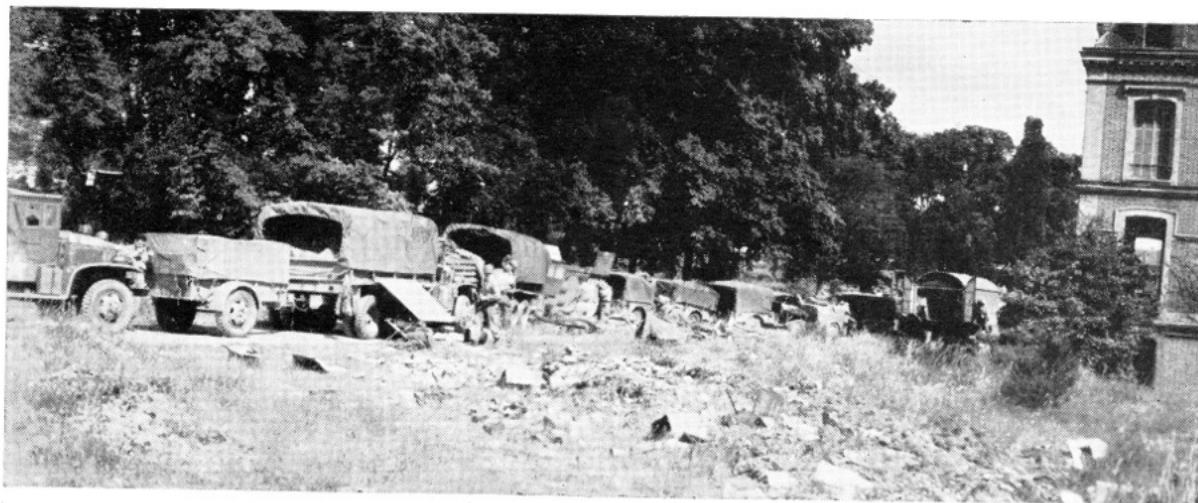
Upon entering Le Harve harbor, we began to see the work of our own Air Arm. Le Harve's waterfront was a mass of rubble. Civilians were probing in the ruins attempting to salvage some small part of their loss. The "look" in the eyes of these people, made us wonder if we really were liberators. It could scarcely be called a

look of affection. We soon left Le Harve and proceeded on to Camp Twenty Grand, near Rouen. We were at this assembly area for about ten days. Ten days of wood chopping and wondering what our fate was to be. Our English pounds were changed to French francs, and a cycle of money changing began which plagued us all the way. The word "Blackmarket" became a part of our vocabulary and it was here we first realized the bartering power of a pack of "butts." We were stepping into a new era. Rather strange but exciting. We were in a country truly foreign, and no one could foretell what lay ahead.

We bid "adieu" to France on the 6th of March and began our two day motor march through



LT. JACK E. SPANGLER
SECOND PLATOON
"C" COMPANY



"Coming Back"

MEN OF 1ST SQUAD, 2ND PLATOON, COMPANY C

R. Perales, Ray, E. Klopp, D. Pothel, R. Moran
H. Lloyd, R. Eber, O. Grambo, W. Colman, W. Dattenhoffer

Belgium into Holland. We lodged in a school-house at Hugen, near Maastricht, Holland. Our stay was just long enough to get our French francs changed to the Dutch Gulden. It was on the 11th of March that we moved into Germany and were given the assignment of maintaining an MSR. This included road repair and the construction of several wooden trestle bridges. Our headquarters was at Grebben, Germany, a one time prosperous German village now vacated, by order of Der Fueher, and—the might of our advancing armies. We saw for the first time enemy dead and much discarded equipment of war. Men also began to think and ask themselves questions. Did not these homes indicate, a God fearing people? Is this not a beautiful country, not too unlike our own? Are they not a prosperous and highly intellectual people? What is this all about? We had little time to think however so those questions and many others were left unanswered,—and perhaps still are.

The supply route in shape, we returned to Maastricht, Holland, where we helped operate an Engineer Depot. An unexciting job but vitally necessary for the tremendous task of bridging the Rhine. The 3rd platoon, under Lt. Lathrop, received little rest however, as they were sent out to support or assist the 17th Airborne in this crossing. A convoy of 2½ ton trucks were loaded with demolition's and held in readiness at Issum, near Wessel, where the crossing was to be made. These trucks were convoyed across to the Airborne troops that had landed hours before and taken the town of Wessel. The drivers, led by Lt. Hoobler, were subjected to Artillery

fire and strafing planes for the first time. Several of the men were ah—surprised to find a sniper being taken from the rear door of a home, just after they had tossed their bed rolls in the front. For this group at least, this was their baptism of fire. Not hardened veterans, but you could tell when they returned that they knew what it was all about.

"Eh-eh-eh—Don't touch that 'fraulien'."

On the last day of March we entered Germany for the second time. Our first stop was Kalden Kirchen, just inside the German border. There we continued a primary engineer duty,—the maintenance of roads.

By this time the battle had surged on past the Rhine. Refugees were coming back. We noticed they walked with their shoulders back, their heads up, and a determined set to their jaw. They viewed the wreckage of their homes with little apparent emotion, but set to cleaning it up with a will.

On the 5th of April we crossed the Rhine at Wessel and skirting the Ruhr pocket, we made a mad 120 mile night motor march to Beckum. On the way, men in the rear of the trucks were more than a little disturbed by the tremendous roar of artillery fire to our right. At Beckum we were incorporated into Task Force Twaddle. Mission: to exterminate the defenders of the Ruhr pocket. Task Force Twaddle consisted of the 95th Inf. Division, 8th Armd. Division, and supporting troops. Supporting the 95th Inf. we made subsequent moves to Nord-Dinker, and Altonboggie. The platoons under their respective platoon leaders were given daily missions such as clear-

ing road blocks, maintaining roads, and bridge construction. Bridges demolished on the Autobahn, a four lane super-highway (Hitler's pride and joy), gave "C" Company the opportunity to really "shine." Lt. Lathrop and his "Roger's Raiders," (with the able assistance of the 1st platoon) built the first, "Double Carriageway Bailey," in the European Theater of Operations. A bastard bridge that made good and finally found a home—as evidenced by the higher headquarters "Poop," which came out later. That was "C" Company in the prime of life.

For the most part the clearing of the Ruhr pocket, completed 15 Apr 1945, was hard work and serious business. However, as we look back we find ourselves smiling or perhaps even chuckling at some of the more amusing episodes. The time Capt. Autry our CO, briefed S/Sgt. Rogers on a road job. "Sergeant," said the Captain, "I want you to see that this road, (he points) from here to the Railroad Depot, is free of all obstacles. This depot was just taken early this morning."

"Yes,—gulp—Sir," muttered the Sergeant. He leaves and as he wipes the sweat from his brow with a shaking hand he confides to his squad

Sgt's, that he turned around at that depot on a reconnaissance 36 hours before.

After the elimination of the Ruhr pocket, Catfish, of which Company "C" is still a component part, plunged deeper into the heart of Germany. From Altonboggie, (via Autobahn) we sailed after the fast, Ninth Army's 2nd Armd. Division. Through Kassel, past Paderborn to Hildersheim, twenty five miles south of the oft bombed city of Hannover. After several days in Hildersheim we continued on in the direction of Berlin, past Brunswick to Wendhausen. We were now only thirty miles from Magdeburgh on the Elbe, and victory was in sight. Our armies were slicing and cutting Germany into small pieces. Pockets if you please, and it was just such a pocket which caused some anxiety, and several other reactions, one bitter, cold night at Wendhausen. There were several forested hills to the east of the town, infested with Germans. This forced us to set up a defensive position during the night, holding until the tanks in the neighboring village, could move on in, in the morning. However, artillery was brought up during the night and was able to take much of the fight out of the "Krauts" with a three hour barrage. Just how speedily

MEN OF 2nd SQUAD, 2nd PLATOON, COMPANY C

A. Hudson, J. Johson, Carter, Peterson, R. Broderson, B. Wichern

A. Gentile, D. Dorsey, M. Simmons, J. Magnolia, K. Rogers





MEN OF 3rd SQUAD, 2nd PLATOON, COMPANY C

L. Prosenyak, F. Ahlin, N. Donatelli, G. Gaydos, W. Totten, S. Corrado, G. Reavis
C. Paldmaki, D. Rockwood, E. Koberna, L. Tiner

and how completely this pocket was taken care of, I do not know,—as we moved at dawn.

Our next stop was Hermann Goering's Hunting Lodge several miles from Brunswick. It was here that Capt. Autry, our CO since Camp Livingston, was made S-4 with Capt. Dunlop becoming our Commanding Officer. Another change involved Lt. Lathrop and Lt. Hoobler, who were shifted from "C" to "A", and "A" to "C", respectively.

Hermann was quite a sportsman. His rifle and pistol ranges gave men with a few spare hours an opportunity to sharpen their eye with any newly acquired weapon. He also had fine pistols, cameras and typewriters. (Right boys?)

From Goering's Lodge we moved to Klein Bulten, midway between Brunswick and Hildershiem. At Klein Bulten experience taught us to pull the Naz flags out of the stove pipes if we wanted more draft. (Me no Nazi.) Our mission again was the primary engineer duty,—maintenance of the Main Supply Routes. Such was our duty at Klein Bulten and later at Hildershiem, until the war's end.

During the lull, after the storm, we achieved the near impossible by not moving for nearly a month. Hunting and fishing expeditions were organized to visit the Harz Mountains. There were no fish in the lakes and very little game to hunt, but nevertheless the expeditions were a success. It wasn't until we returned from one such excursion that our ever present source of information, the Stars and Stripes, informed us that SS snipers were quite thick in those Mts. But again we can just smile because that's all in the past.

We are just about ready to take "C" Company back to France and as yet we have written nary a word of the "Fraulien," and this "Non-Fraternization." However, as I understand it, this history is partially for civilian consumption, so perhaps the less said the better. (My wife might read it.)

'OW—BOAT, YOU—!!!

The 27th of May found us withdrawing from Germany, our hopes bouyed up by the possibility



SGT. THOMPSON



SGT. RUBEN KAEHLER



of a quick boat ride home. It was a four day, seven hundred mile motor march that took us to the Normandy peninsula. Munchen Gladback, Germany; Cambrai, France; Rouen, France; and finally our destination, St. Mere Eglise. Our "Castle in the Air," was shattered when we were given work jobs instead of a boat ride. The next month found us becoming familiar with depots, pipelines and mademoiselles. Intermittent passes to Paris gave some of the men a chance to see France's leading city.

"C" Company was again honored on June 6, when we participated in a parade on Omaha Beach to dedicate a memorial to other brave engineer units that had landed one year before.

Our Company headquarters was stationed at Coutainville for much of our stay in France. The platoons were given jobs which kept them separated for weeks at a time. Various clubs around Nogent and Mamers were the only source of entertainment.

After several months of Engineer details, Catfish again hit the road, this time back to Verviers, Belgium, close to the German border. It was just after we arrived in Verviers that every newscast seemed to flash another sensational news story. Russia's declaration of war, the Atomic bomb, and finally the capitulation of Japan. Those headlines in reality meant nothing to us as individuals. Anxiety reigned as to what it would do to our precious "C" Company. "C" Company had had a hard life. She, (no sex has yet been established, so I shall set a precedent by giving an entirely male organization a female gender) reached maturity in England, and since then has traveled thrice four nations over. Add the harrowing experiences of the war to this and

you can easily understand the reasons for greying of the hair, and a gradual drooping of the shoulders. In fact as this is being written "C" Company, (as we know it) is just about "Kaput." We were stunned to hear—just twenty four hours ago—that "C" Company was to be torn asunder—disintegrated. Straight from the shoulder, this is it! All men with less than forty five points will be transferred to the Army of Occupation. A mighty blow to poor, aged "C" Company. Only time will tell whether she'll survive or fall. Just in case she should fall, (sooner or later "Catfish-1254" will become merely a notation in our nation's archives) I think it only fitting and proper that we enclose an epitaph before leaving. God Bless her and May she rest in peace.



LT. HORACE B. LATHROP
THIRD PLATOON
"C" COMPANY



MEN OF 1st SQUAD, 3rd PLATOON, COMPANY C

Thompson, M. Evanstad, W. Leaf, A. Mertens, E. Sirdoreus, O. Kjer, P. Tomell
G. Sellers, C. Blandford, Carabou, R. Roby, C. Kazarian, B. Wilkes, Seidenberg

MEN OF 2nd SQUAD, 3rd PLATOON, COMPANY C

L. Warner, G. Adelemaun, L. Blackburn, J. Conti, C. Bilunas, R. S. Wallow, O. Baldwin
R. K. Aenler, E. Hutchins, D. Bridgewater, Klei, W. Heggen, H. Colby





MEN OF 3rd SQUAD, 3rd PLATOON, COMPANY C

J. Schofield, J. Zajkowsi, C. Anderson, C. Garrard, G. Deardorf

R. Levson, J. Nolan, A. Tisdale, F. Trawinski, D. S. Hort

THE \$65 QUESTION



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1254th ENGINEER

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