

# FIRE IN THE HOLE

305<sup>TH</sup> ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION



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NO. 5

## GENERAL PATTON AND THE ENGINEERS

Pictorial highlights of General Patton's inspection of the 305th Engineer Battalion on July 19. All three shots were taken near Kempten, where B Company assembled the foot bridge.



Top photo shows General Patton discussing the construction of the foot bridge with General McBride (back to camera), Lt. Col. McCollum, and Lt. Smith.

In the center picture he and group of eng'rs watch the assembling.

To the right is General Patton crossing the finished bridge.

### "TENTH ARMORED MEN, 305TH WELCOMES YOU"

By Rochelle Rountree

The 305th Engineers would like to take this opportunity to welcome the men from the 10th Armored Division, and all other new men, who have been recently transferred to us. We hope that you do not find an engineer's job here too great a change over from your past experiences with the armored.

We are happy to have you men with us and we feel that just as close a friendship will develop from our associations, as there was with the men whom you replaced. We want you to feel at home and not consider yourselves as strangers. We all join in wishing you a most hearty welcome, and may your stay with us be a pleasant one.

### NEW TYPE I AND E PROGRAM, "BATTLE OF NCOS" TO BE INTRODUCED IN B COMPANY

Here is your chance to give your sergeant a beating — in a quiz program. To develop more interest in the I and E Orientation program, a new idea will be introduced soon. Initially as an experiment in B Company, under the able guidance of 1st Lt. Eiler, B Company's Orientation Officer, two teams will be organized. Six Sergeants and six corporals will slug it out. A set of questions on various Orientation subjects will be lined up and a question put to each team in turn. If one side can't answer, the other will be given the chance, and if neither team can supply the "info", then the audience will give the correct dope.

Each team giving a correct answer will be awarded one point, with the total number of points determining the winner. No prizes, beer is less than 3.2 anyway.

The Orientation Officers invite suggestions on this type program. All men in the Battalion are urged to submit questions with answers, for use in similar sessions in the other companies. Give them to your Orientation Officer.

P.S. This program is entirely original, and has no relationship to the famous "Battle of the Sexes" radio program back home. Oh Yeah!!!

## BATTALION REST CAMP OFFICIALLY OPENS

### The World at Large

**Japan** — Large attacks by carrier planes and B-29's continue unabated. Largest attack of 1,000 carrier planes and over 600 B-29's in broad daylight without fighter escort. U.S. Fleet shells Japan, gets as close as 50 miles from Tokyo.

**Borneo** — Australian troops continue progress inland from Balikpapan, up to 30 miles.

**Manila** — First ETO troops arrive in the Pacific.

**Potsdam** — Meeting of Big Three continues. No definite news yet.

**Belgium** — Parliament votes to dethrone King Leopold.

**Paris** — Trial of Marshal Petain for treason begins.

**Washington** — Congress approves Bretton Woods monetary agreement, starts deliberation on United Nations Charter.

**Spain** — Franco reshuffles cabinet slightly, states that he wants monarchy restored.

Monday July 23. The first official event to be held at "The Castle" designating it as the central recreational area for the Battalion, was a party this afternoon and evening for the boys from A Company. They closed up shop in Markt Oberdorf right after noon chow, and moved en masse to the area.

The afternoon was spent in swimming and good fellowship, plus a little beer drinking every now and then. The kitchen personnel served a hot meal at supper time that was thoroughly enjoyed by soldiers and visitors alike.

In the evening, the 80th Division Band came down and furnished some solid music along with some grand entertainment. There were approximately 130 men from the Company who attended the get-together.

The other three companies held similar parties there this week also, thus giving every man in the Battalion a chance to see what their rest camp has to offer, for beginning Sunday a continuous rotation policy will be in effect, whereby each company will take its turn in sending quotas of 50 men at a time for two day rest periods.

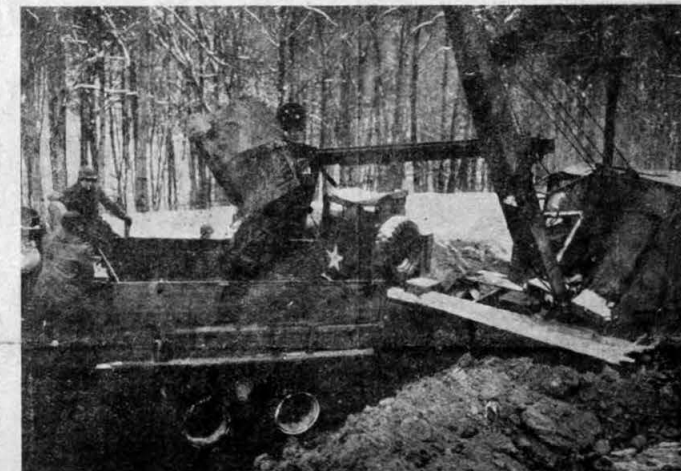
The men who were instrumental in getting the camp ready in such a short while deserve the thanks of each and every one of the rest of us. It was a big job, but it was accomplished in record time.

### DECEMBER BIG MONTH FOR ENG'RS

The first of December found the 305th Engineers still supporting the Division in the attack through the St. Avold sector that had started November 8th, only this time we were moving north in the direction of Forbach. In the period between the 1st and 9th, the Battalion constructed three class 40 steel tread-way bridges, one class 40 Bailey, 80 feet long, and one 2-way class 70 fixed timber trestle bridge. C Company accomplished a large clearance job of a railroad overpass in Merlebach.

From the 10th to the 16th we enjoyed our first official rest period, after having been in contact with the enemy for 102 consecutive days. We continued training however, and held schools for the infantry in the assault of fortified positions, and the handling of explosives. All our clothing and equipment was cleaned and brought in to first class condition. On the 14th there was a Battalion dance in Merlebach, and we had cake, sandwiches and coffee. Meanwhile our Headquarters Section was making plans for future operations.

On December 17, the Battalion moved south with the Division and started the breaching of the Westwall. On the 18th our orders were changed and we made a 150 mile dash to positions north of the city of Luxembourg. General Von Runstedt had gambled his all on a gigantic counter offensive, in the



Engineers from A Company loading sand on a two and a half, preparatory to spreading it over the snow covered roads. All the line companies did much of this kind of work during December.

hopes that his armies could reach the channel and split the Allied forces in two. We went into defensive positions in preparation for the advancing German armor and infantry. However on the 22nd, defense plans were abandoned and the Division attacked, with each engineer company supporting its combat team and performing its normal functions.

On Christmas Eve, Lt. Henke's first platoon, of B Company, joined a task force and went to the re-

lief of the besieged defenders of Bastogne. Five days later they returned and rejoined the Battalion which had now reached the Sure river. Here, the Division once again assumed the defensive and we prepared abatis, laid mine fields, fixed bridges for blowing, and prepared holes for cratering.

The remainder of the month was spent in the vicinity of Ettelbruck, Luxembourg, where we strengthened our defensive positions, and awaited the orders to attack.

# BOOBY TRAP

There is a story circulating around A Company about Sgt. Palmeri kicking the crutch from under a one legged woman. When questioned as to particulars, he answers no to everything, but his face becomes a deep crimson.... Note to Sgt. Odum: Please remove the cud from your mouth while giving close order drill. Or do you always grunt like that.... One of the most humorous incidents in the French stage show last week was entirely impromptu. The magician called an individual on to the stage, and thinking he was an American soldier, did his best to speak to him in English. The dupe, however was a Hungarian DP and didn't understand a word the sleight of hand artist was saying.... The mayor of Unterthingau (Billy Roman) has left his post to study in England. T. J. Michales and Angelo Benedetti have taken over and will occupy the position jointly.... There is an alleged bootlegger in C Company who has taken to violating the first rule of the profession, namely, thou shalt not drink your own poison.... Capt. Pacheco, head man at H&S, finally became so disgusted with the poor attendance at retreat, that he made arrangements with the section leaders to release the men from duty long enough to make the formation. On the first night after the new TR (table of rearrangements) there were many new faces present. Joe Fine even asked someone where they held retreat.... Lt. Miller, C Company, must still be "nervous in the service". One night last week he heard several shots fired in succession and he alerted the guard, thinking it was a "Heinie" burp gun. Instead it was just some deer hunters. Some shooting!.... Sgt. Thomas, A Company, is jumping up and down because he is unable to find any more Halb 'n Halb. We suggest he tap a few of the bloodstreams in the company. His yield should be enormous.... Pfc. Cohen, A Company, has what he calls a miracle file. He says, "It's a miracle when I find what I'm looking for!".... A helpful hint to Sgt. Bryson: the little gal whose pictures adorn your desk, is not going to give you the added points you need.... Have you ever been in the barber shop across from

the Battalion C.P. It is run on the assembly line basis. You go in, sit in one of the chairs, and a girl pins the apron on you and chases the clippers up and down the back of your neck a couple times. All of a sudden, just when you are becoming comfortable, there is a commotion behind you and the girl is working on someone else and a small boy is cutting the top of your hair and around the edges. He no sooner gets warmed up than the old man takes over and adds the finishing touches. Then the girl comes back and powders your neck and collects the fee: the whole effect is to leave you a bit groggy from watching them dash back and forth between customers.... Little Joe Ellis, B Company, received only one slice of bread in the chow line the other day, and he let loose with some remarks that made one of the cooks ask for a transfer.... Although this column is adverse to withholding names and turning it into a guessing contest, we feel that upon occasion, we are justified in doing so, and this is one of them. An officer in Battalion Headquarters has rather large feet, and recently in a formal ceremony, he was presented with a pair of wooden paddles that may be used in place of shoes. So if you notice a Lieutenant shuffling around instead of walking proudly as an officer should, please do not embarrass him by looking at his feet. Just pretend that it is perfectly normal for one to move with that rather "liquid" motion.... "Snerd" Lewis, A Company, since he has taken over the job of "dog robber" has adorned his body with an apron. Now all he needs is a towel to complete his costume. Come, come, Lewis, let's do a good job.... Speaking of Lewis, he wants to know upon what authority Pvt. Truesdale, A Company reporter, signs his name with the rank of Pfc. "Seems to be sort of jumping the gun", says Lewis. "A little more modesty, please".... Why is it that so many girls from Markt Oberdorf walk past the A Company CP at least twice a day with a big smile for Captain McCann, while the other officers don't even rate a wink. Even Cohen can't do any good, and he is one of our best "whistler's at hers".... Lt. Kochanski has erected a sign in A Company's officer's quarters — "thru these portals pass five of the world's silliest mortals". After looking in the other night, we think he might be right. There we saw the "little officer" doing an Apache, Indian Adagio dance in nothing else but a pair of leather shorts at least three times too large for him.

## "IT'S MURDER," HE SAYS

Pvt. Earnest A. Richards, one of A Company's newly acquired engineers, has very little to say when the point question comes under discussion. He came into the army around the first of the year, left the states in May, and joined us in July; all of which gives him the grand total of 5 points on his ASR.

At least he needn't be concerned as to the location of his eventual destination. Drop us a line when you get there "Ernie", we're collecting Oriental postage stamps.

## WINS SILVER STAR



Cpl. L. W. Jones

## FOR HEROIC ACTION

Cpl. L. W. Jones, formerly of C Company has been awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in action. While his platoon was engaged in removing mines near Laudremont, France, he was wounded by the explosion of one, receiving shrapnel in the chest and legs. Disregarding his own wounds, he crawled several yards to assist an officer who was also wounded. Cpl. Jones applied a tourniquet to the officer's leg, which action probably saved his life. He then crawled some 200 yards on his stomach and summoned aid from a passing jeep driver.

When the complete history of World War II is written it will be concerned mostly with men like Cpl. Jones and their heroic feats. Although he is no longer a member of this Battalion, we are none the less proud of his achievements, and we want him to know, wherever he is, that the men who were once his comrades shall never forget his bravery and courage as displayed on the field of battle.

## BATTALION MEDIC PLACES SECOND IN DIVISION CARBINE MATCH

Kaufbeuren, July 21. Cpl. George Payne, popular 305th medic showed the boys in the Division how a carbine should be handled. Competing with men from all other units in the 80th, Payne placed second in the finals, with a score of 187 out of a possible 220. In spite of the fact that the contestants could choose their own positions, it was an extremely difficult course to fire, and Cpl. Payne's score is considered an excellent one.

It may seem odd that a man who did not handle a gun all through the war could defeat others more familiar with the weapon, but George says "I grew up with a gun in my hand."

Once during a severe rain storm, three roosters found themselves caught in the deluge. Two of them ran for the barn. The third, the smart one, made a duck under a nearby porch.

Two burly cannibals caught a beautiful young white girl and brought her before their chief. He glanced casually over the girl, yawned and said: "I believe I'll have my breakfast in bed this morning."

## FRENCH STAGE SHOW PRESENTED BY USO AT BATTALION THEATER

By Pvt. Truesdale

Markt Oberdorf, July 19. The USO presented the French stage show "See Vous Play" (and that is the way they spelled it) at the Battalion theater this afternoon.

Supported with a five piece orchestra, seven girls and four men gave a very enjoyable entertainment that was attended by an audience of some 200 soldiers.

There were four dancing girls who gave excellent exhibitions of the terphischorean art with the Tango, Bolero, and various other dances. The "gals" were "slick chicks" too, and the boys showed their appreciation with whistles and cat-calls.

The magician, with his pretty assistant, performed several feats of legerdemain that both pleased and mystified the audience.

The mistress of ceremonies, a French "gal" of no mean parts, displayed great versatility, singing, dancing, and gabbing in both French and English.

The boys left the theater much refreshed after the couple hours of laughter, fun, and feminine beauty.

## HAL MCINTYRE'S ORCHESTRA ENTERTAINS TROOPS AT "BLUE RIDGER" HC CLUB

By Pvt. Truesdale

Kaufbeuren, July 24. The swing orchestra of Hal McIntyre did a swell job of entertaining the 80th Division troops at the "Blue Ridger" Red Cross Club in Kaufbeuren. His versions of current numbers were really "in the groove" and the way he handled the old favorites sent a wave of nostalgia through the homesick crowd.

The dance started at 1900 hours and lasted until 2300. His featured singer, Ruth Gaylor, is for my money one of the loveliest thrushes I have ever seen, and she sent that little chill running up and down the spine.

The club was jam packed with music loving G I's, who haven't heard that kind of good old American Swing for a long, long time, and even though it did sort of increase that longing to be home, we could stand "beaucoup" of entertainment featuring good orchestras.

## Sweet Dreams Lieutenant!

Some mischievous individual from A Company, presumably an officer, sprinkled a whole bottle of perfume, (highly scented if not expensive) in Lt. Costley's bedroll. Now if the Lt. doesn't have sweet dreams, I'm sure no one else should.

1st Sailor Son: "Father, I did something awful last night and I need 10,000 bucks or she'll sue."

Father: "It's a lot of money, but anything to save the family honor."

2nd. Sailor Son: "Father, I'm in an awful jam, and I must have 10,000 dollars to keep her quiet."

Father: "Good Lord! You boys are taking my last cent, but it's better than having our good name dragged in the mud."

Wave Daughter: "Father, I did something awful last night —"

Father: "AT LAST, now we collect."



From C Company: Is it really necessary that we have a 24 hour guard on all posts? We're not kicking about the one in front of the C.P., but we know for a fact that many other outfits in this vicinity do not maintain round the clock guards on every post. After all, that duty rolls around rather often, and the men would like a little time to themselves, now that the war has been over almost three months. If other units can dispense with it, there is no reason why we can't.

From A Company: The dance at "The Castle" was alright and everyone had a good time — for a half hour. That must have been the shortest dance on record. We suggest that whoever was in charge of the affair attempt to get a little more coordination for the next one. The band arrived at 8:45 and the girls left at 9:15. Now that surely doesn't make sense to anyone.

From C Company: We were told, that after the cessation of hostilities, passes would be increased to 15% of the company strength. Well, they ceased some time ago and we are still allowed only about 1% on pass at a time. At that rate it will take at least two years for everyone to get a crack at it. Isn't there anything that can be done about this. Ed: The Army pass policy will be published by S 1.

From C Company: Replacements from the States continue to get more breaks than the "oldmen" who have been in the Company for some time. When it comes to passes and privileges, seniority rights should mean something, but instead it seems to work just the opposite. All we ask is fair consideration for the months we have spent over here, and that we will not be shunted aside for men who have never experienced any combat.

From A Company: When will the passes and furloughs that were promised the winners of the Division Pistol Meet be granted. They have been waiting over two weeks, and are beginning to get discouraged. If they must wait until the Division gets all the winners from all the events, some of them will not get to go due to quota restrictions on passes. Ed: Those men will get passes in the near Future.

## FIRE IN THE HOLE

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# BATTALION HISTORY

## The Story of the 305<sup>th</sup> Eng'rs in Training and Combat

(Due to repeated requests from members of the Battalion for a copy of Lt. Perlman's "History of the 305<sup>th</sup>", we are printing it in full as given by him on Activation Day.)

### Activation

The 305<sup>th</sup> Engineer Combat Battalion was activated on July 15, 1942 as part of the 80th Infantry Division, at Camp Forrest, Tennessee. The authorized strength was 28 Officers and 690 enlisted men. The officer cadre came in part from the Regular Army, and in part from the Reserve Corps; but mostly from the Engineer Officer Candidate School. The enlisted cadre came from the 12th Engineer Battalion, 8th Infantry Division.

The filler replacements began arriving on July 19, 1942. By the end of July we were nearing full strength and orientation training had been completed by most of the men. On August 10th the 17 weeks MTP was started and by the 14th we were up to full strength.

During the early stages of training our Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Elliott, placed a great deal of emphasis on first getting the men in good physical condition. Calisthenics came every morning and soon it got to be a daily sight to see the Battalion double timing around the parade ground. An additional lap was added each day until the distance covered equaled one mile. Towards the end of August we had our first hike, a distance of eight miles.

On the 4th of September, 1942, Lt. Col. Elliott was relieved as Battalion Commander by Major Allen F. Clark Jr. A Battalion review was held in Lt. Col. Elliott's honor; and on the night prior to his departure he was tendered an informal farewell party. No one present could conceal sincere regret at losing such an able commander.

### MTP Training

Under Major Clark the 17 week MTP continued steadily at the same pace set during the opening weeks. Range season was held and 67% of the men qualified with the rifle. The outstanding event of the month was the III Corps Commander's inspection on the 24th. This was the first time that the entire personnel and equipment of the Battalion had been assembled at the same time. General Lucas commended us on the condition of our equipment.

Late in November we were engaged in the MTP tests conducted by testing teams from III Corps Headquarters. A creditable showing was made with the Battalion receiving marks of "excellent" in many tests. This completed the 17 weeks MTP.

The Battalion colors were presented to us on December 12th by Major General Joseph D. Patch, Commanding General of the 80th Division. Shortly afterwards we moved to Cumberland Springs for our first week's bivouac.

Upon our return from bivouac, we started several projects, the most important being the construction of a Nazi Village for the First Ranger School. This village became the subject for some of the most publicized news photos in the States. Another interesting project was the demolition of five bridges at Knoxville for the Tennessee Valley Authority.

On February 12th, 1943 an enlisted cadre was sent to the 106th Infantry Division. The cadre consisted of 70 enlisted men and one officer.

From February 22nd to March 21st, the combat team exercises of the 80th Division were held. Each of the line companies spent some time in the field working together with their respective Combat Teams. This was the first time that we had worked together with other parts of the Division.

On April 17th, the President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt, paid a surprise visit to Camp Forrest while the 80th Division and other post units were having a full field inspection. The President shook hands with Lt. Col. Clark and congratulated him on the appearance of the engineer equipment.

### Maneuvers

From April 17th to May 7th we took part in the Division Field Exercises, held in the Shelbyville, Fayetteville, Winchester, Manchester area. This was sort of a preliminary for the Second Army Maneuvers which started late in June. We left Camp Forrest on June 22nd and motored to the vicinity of Murfreesboro where we awaited the opening of maneuvers.

They were divided into eight problems. The first four enabled us to become acquainted with the engineer mission in the attack. We were called upon to guard vital bridges, construct fords, simulate bridge repairs, make assault crossings, and assemble foot bridges. During the last four problems the Battalion, together with the Division, was on the defensive. Our missions consisted of laying hasty mine fields, setting up road blocks and obstacles, and preparing bridges for demolition. On one problem we built a 540 foot assault boat bridge across the Cumberland river. The end of maneuvers found us tired and dirty, but mentally alert and with an offensive spirit of combat. The 305<sup>th</sup> had passed its "teens".

Lt. Col. Clark left us on August 27th for a new assignment. We lost our best officer and all regretted to see him leave. On September 2nd we welcomed our new Battalion Commander, Maj. Albert E. McCollum, who is still with us and now holds the rank of Lt. Col.

### Other Camps

Immediately after maneuvers we entrained at Gallatin, Tennessee, for Camp Phillips, Kansas. Some of the men left from the maneuver area for 15 day furloughs and rejoined the Battalion in Kansas.

At Camp Phillips we went through an intensive training program which consisted mostly of range work. Every weapon was fired and qualification was nearly 100%. Our stay in Kansas was highlighted by the week spent at the Kanapolis Dam Area. There the Battalion became acquainted with the Bailey Bridge.

On November 24th, 1943, the 80th started the transfer from Camp Phillips to Camp Laguna, Arizona, in the California-Arizona Maneuver Area, for desert training.

Most of our time on the desert was spent in conditioning, and training became more concentrated each week. The highlight was the platoon leadership tests. The last phase of the exercise consisted of a march over three mountains, one of which was 3500 feet high. Our desert training ended with a three weeks Corps maneuver.

Early in April, 1944, the Battalion moved to Port Dix, New Jersey. It was at this camp that the 80th Division was demobilized

after World War I. During the period here, POM requirements were complied with, and all supplies were turned in prior to embarkation for overseas. We all received furloughs and many of the men got home for several week ends.

On June 19th we moved to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, where the Division was staged, prior to going overseas. Here personal equipment was checked and rechecked, and last physical exams were given. At 1400 hours on July 1st we sailed out of New York harbor on the Queen Mary, headed for England.

After arriving in Scotland on July 6th, the Battalion was sent immediately to Camp Golbore, England. Staying there for three weeks, we received all our equipment and supplies. On August 1st we left for Southampton in Southern England.

### Combat

On August 6th, we landed on Utah beach near St. Jores, France. From here we moved to Argentan where we encountered our first real test of combat. It was here that the Division closed the Falaise-Argentan Gap. Through this sector the engineers were kept busy day and night sweeping roads, building bridges, clearing roads of debris, removing road blocks, and burying dead animals. From Argentan the Division took off in pursuit of the rapidly withdrawing enemy. Many rivers were crossed, the Seine, Aube, Marne, and the Meuse. Then came the Moselle. Here our first large scale opposition was encountered. C Co. made a hasty crossing at Toul, while an unsuccessful one was attempted at Pont-A-Mousson. A deliberate assault crossing was then made by A and B Companies at Dieulouard against strong opposition. The Battalion was then kept busy in the slowly expanding bridgehead clearing mines, filling craters, removing rubble, abatis, and other road blocks. A Company was committed as infantry in the bitter battle of Loisy. For gallantry in action during these operations, Private Quick, A Company, received the first Silver Star.

During October, while waiting for supplies for the next big push, the Battalion was very busy laying mines, setting up road blocks and constructing defensive positions. Roads were built for the Infantry, as wet weather made all existing gravel roads unserviceable. The men will never forget Foret de Facq, Mousson Hill, Atton, Loisy, Ville-a-Val, St. Genevieve, Sivry, Mt. St. Jean, Mt. Toulon, Serrieres, and other places. Cpl. Loren Jones, C Company, received a Silver Star for gallantry in action on October 6th.

### Lorraine

On November 8th, the big attack started with an assault crossing of the flooded Seille river; A Company at Port-sur-Seille, and B and C Companies at Clemery and Nomeny. This was really a more difficult operation than the crossing of the Moselle; for in addition to ferrying doughboys across, building footbridges, vehicular ferries, and an assault boat bridge, the Battalion had to sweep roads, build culverts, clear abatis, and other road blocks from the far shore. Later B and C Companies had their hands full clearing mines and booby traps at Delme Ridge. On November 8th, S Sgt. Byrd, C Company, received the first battlefield commission.

On we went, Nied Francaise, Nied Allemande, to Falquemont,

then St. Avold. Many treadway bridges were put in under fire. B Company will long remember it's Bailey Bridges and assault boat bridge at Falquemont. The road from Falquemont to Tetting gave A Company a big headache with it's craters, blown culverts, shell-holes, and antitank ditches. St. Avold was taken by the Division climaxing our drive from the Moselle.

### Ardennes

On December 10th, S Sgt. Ross Smith of B Co. was made a 2nd Lt. On the 15th the Battalion was reorganized under a new T.O. and E. After 102 consecutive days of contact with the enemy, our division rested for a week.

On December 17th the B'n. moved South with the Division and began the breaching of the Westwall. The next day our orders were changed and we made a 150 mile dash to North of Luxembourg, where the German's threatening counter attack was menacing the city proper. An extensive barrier plan was prepared and partially executed. B Company got to blow it's first bridge in Ettlebruck. Then we attacked again. Lt. Henke's 1st platoon from B Company joined the 318th and 4th armored in the spectacular relief of Bastogne. In addition to our usual engineer duties, we were busy night and day sanding the icy roads. S Sgt. Van Trieste, C Company, was awarded the Silver Star for his exploits on December 20th.

In Luxembourg, we crossed the Sure, Wiltz, and Clerf rivers. All were difficult due to the steep valleys of the Ardennes. AP minefields around Hiderscheidgrund, Tadtler, Bourscheid, and Welscheid. Especially the Schu mines, which were hidden in the snow and very difficult to find and remove. In Goersdorf and Dahl, C Company worked under frequent artillery fire. Engineer night patrols were out every night.

### Rhineland

After the Bulge was contained, the Division then moved East and prepared to breach the famous Siegfried Line at Wallendorf and Dillingen. The B'n. crossed the flooded Our and Saur Rivers under heavy enemy fire on February 7th. Thus we first set foot on German soil. While the supporting engineers did all the large jobs, our men were busy crossing infantry, putting up foot bridges, destroying pillboxes, filling craters, putting in Bailey and treadway bridges, and clearing the roads. This was our second most difficult operation, and in spite of the work difficulties, and enemy action, the men were superb. In February, Sgts. Kelsky, H&S Company, and Labriole, A Company, were promoted to 2nd. Lts. T. S. Dressler, C Company was awarded a Silver Star.

The Battalion moved on across the Prum and up to the Kyll River. Roads were bad and needed continuous work. From there the Battalion shifted south to Saarburg, went through Zerf and Losheim before the German lines started to crack. Then we raced through St. Wendell, Kaiserslautern, Bad Dürkheim, and were stopped on orders, five miles short of the Rhine. Who will ever forget the truck-littered road from Kaiserslautern to Bad Dürkheim. Six bulldozers were busy a whole day pushing hundreds of vehicles, some still burning, off the road. Many "Speery" road blocks had to be removed in this sector. Two more battlefield commissions were awarded in March. Sgt. Lembo, B Company and Sgt. Wiser, C Company.



Lt. Col. Albert McCollum, 305th Engineer B'n. Commander

### Central Germany

After a brief stop-off near Rokenhausen, the Battalion moved to Mainz and prepared to cross the Rhine. This historic event took place on March 28th. C Company crossed the Main river, east of Mainz, A and B crossed the Rhine in town. Due to the disorganized German resistance, this crossing turned out to be a hasty one. There was little actual engineer work for the Battalion. It seemed that we were just along for the ride. Through Wiesbaden, and Homberg, up the Autobahn to Kassel. Few mines were encountered; our only large job being clearance of knocked out German vehicles and rubble in towns. From Kassel, the Battalion shifted east to Gotha, continued our fast pace through Erfurt, Weimar, Jena, and Gera to the outskirts of Chemnitz. Then another fast shift south to Bamberg, Nurnberg, Regensburg.

The Division was now in reserve and the Battalion did only routine jobs. A great amount of road work was performed in Nurnberg.

The Danube was crossed near Regensburg, and on reaching the Isar river, a daylight hasty assault crossing was successfully completed. The Inn river necessitated our second assault crossing within three days.

On May 10th S Sgt. Hoffman, B Company received the seventh battlefield commission in the Battalion.

On we raced until contact was made with the Russians on the Ems river. Then on May 8th came the great news and the war was over. And even though our work was by no means done, we could utter a sigh of relief.

While we slowly started to set up for garrison life, some of our men were busy operating railroads, opening up the road nets, and hauling DP's on the first leg of their journey home.

From the Vocklabruck, Austria area, the Battalion moved, on June 11th, to Southern Bavaria, our present occupational area.

Thus ends this very brief account of our glorious combat record here in the ETO. We know that each and every one of you are justly proud of your Battalion's achievements, and her contribution to the victory.

### SOME OF ORIGINAL CADRE MEMBERS BACK IN THE STATES

Sgt. Russel Dunlavey B Company received a letter from one of the original cadre men in the Battalion, in which was stated the fact that several of the cadre men are now back in the states.

The men referred to were captured during the Battle of the Bulge, and then later freed by American troops.