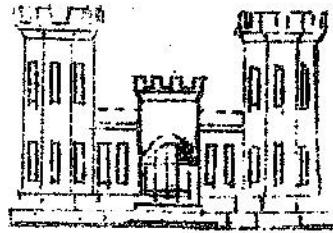
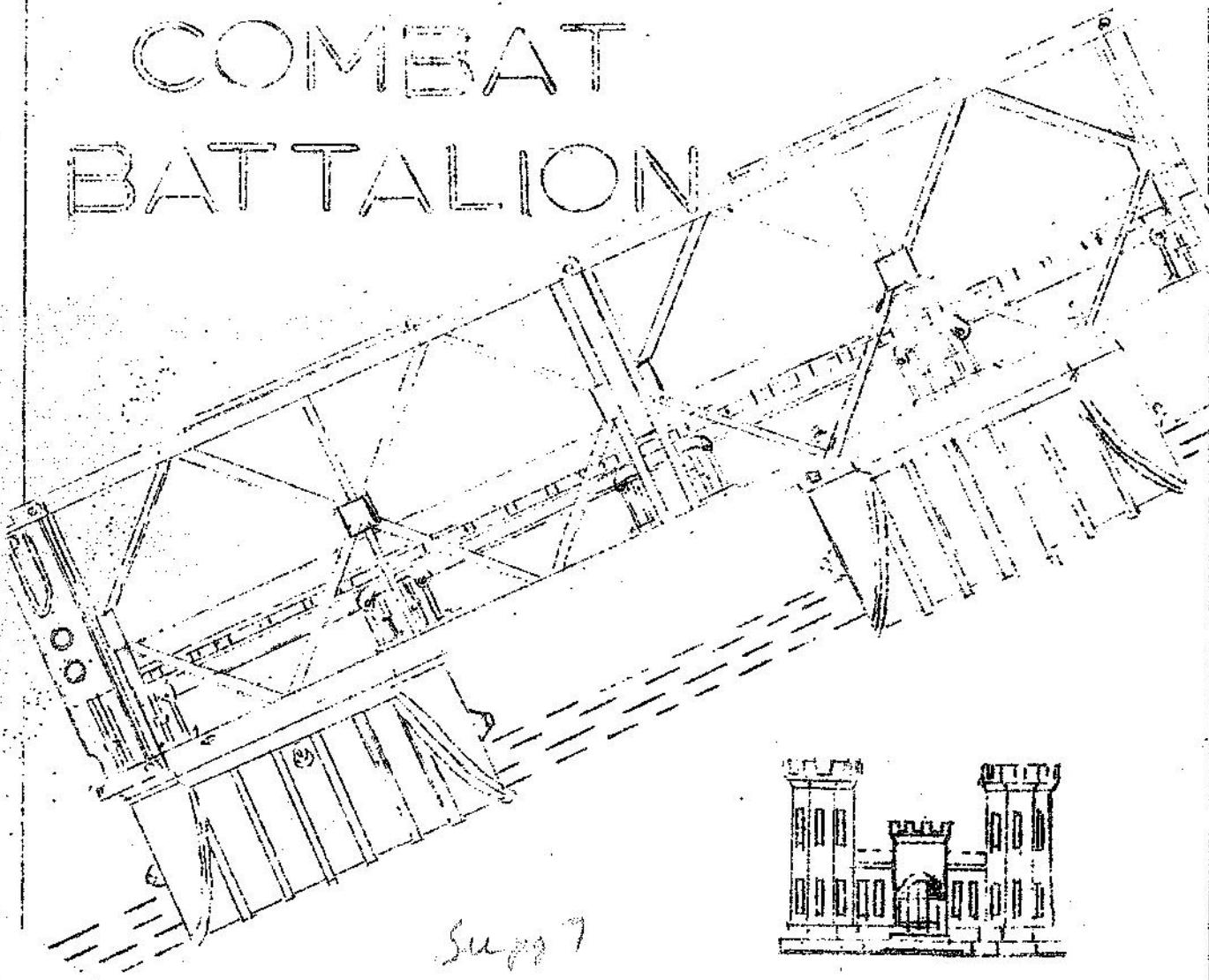




Mr. Eugene L. Williams
1238 43rd Ave. N.
Saint Petersburg, FL 33703-4436

UNIT
HISTORY
1235th ENGINEER
COMBAT
BATTALION



ESSAYONS

N BY VALLACQUA

The fill was finally finished, however, but its life was of short duration as heavy traffic over the road necessitated constant maintenance at the point and at one time resulted in what amounted to the near re-construction of the fill. The second and third platoons of Company C removed a 130 foot double-double fixed Bailey from over the Erft Canal at Epinghoven and hauled the material to the group dump at Lippens. The third platoon of Company C was also employed at Bedburg where they completed a two way timber trestle bridge which had been started by the 1251st Engineer Combat Battalion.

Upon the cessation of hostilities, 8 May 1945, the battalion was assigned an area of responsibility extending from Wessel on the north, south along the Rhine River to a point ten miles north of Cologne, and west to the Dutch border. The unit was responsible for all engineer work necessary within this area, with primary importance attached to the maintenance of the road and bridge network and to the clearance of debris and rubble from the war torn streets of such large cities as Krefeld, Munchen Gladbach, Luess, Viersen, Geldern, Moers and Rheydt. To accomplish this task the services of large numbers of German civilians were obtained; these laborers worked directly under the supervision of the local burgomasters who were, in turn, responsible to the newly created Roads Section of the unit. The 2d Platoon of Company A removed a 40 foot double single Bailey bridge on highway N-58 between Geldern and Wessel and replaced it with a one way 70, two way 40 timber trestle bridge at this time.

In order to insure constant maintenance of the road net, daily road patrols were sent out on motor bikes and jeeps to cover the many hundreds of miles of road under Battalion jurisdiction, but so vast was the area to be covered that it became necessary to supplement these patrols with frequent reconnaissance by air. At this time the Battalion was also assigned the mission of completing a systematized reconnaissance and inventory of all industrial plants and materials within the area of responsibility. On 14 May the 3d Platoon of Company B was sent to Munchen Gladbach to operate a sign factory supplying Corps units. This task was continued until 31 May. On 20 May 1945, the unit was alerted for redeployment to the Pacific Theater of Operations and relieved of all tactical assignments.

A training schedule stressing training in Japanese tactics, river crossing operations, small arms firing, and the firing of crew served weapons was immediately initiated and continued for nearly a month. During the first week in May the Battalion received a Commendation from Major General Harmon, Commanding General XXII Corps for outstanding achievement in the construction of the Triumph Bridge. On 13 June the Battalion was assigned to the 1148th Engineer Combat Group and on 16 June was relieved from all former assignments and reassigned to XXII Corps with orders to move immediately to Aueviller in Southern Germany.

Leaving Kempen on 16 June 1945, two months after its arrival in that city, the Battalion moved south to Aueweiler by motor convoy and was assigned to the 1124th Engineer Combat Group. During its sojourn in southern Germany the organization bivouaced in a temporary cantonment near a former German Officers' training center and maneuver area where further training, preparing for the move to the PTO, was conducted.

On 27 June the Battalion again entrucked, this time for the Arles Staging Area near Marseilles, France. Nightly halts were made at Nancy, Dijon and St Rambert, all in France, and on 30 June, the unit arrived at its new home in Arles. Processing of equipment for redeployment was speedily completed and further orders were awaited. At this time the morale of the Battalion ebbed to its lowest point. The Staging Area provided few of the many entertainment features so widely heralded and the men found the combination of dust, heat and inactivity difficult to bear.

On 22 July impedimenta was loaded upon liberty ships which departed shortly thereafter for the Pacific. During the third week in July the Battalion received a letter dated 5 July 45 from USEET Headquarters awarding this unit the bronze battle star for participation in the campaign of Central Germany.

While at Arles a fortunate few of the men were able to obtain seven-day recuperational furloughs at the resort areas on the Riviera, activity for the most part consisted of organized athletics, short passes to the nearby towns, and the meager entertainment afforded by the few USO shows which played at the camp. A mild attack of hysteria seized the Battalion on the night of 11 August 1945, when the false rumor that Japan had surrendered spread like wild-fire through the staging area. However, after several thrilling minutes of wild enthusiasm the rumor was quelled and the demonstrators dispersed.

On 14 August the Battalion entrucked for the port at Marseilles and embarked aboard the USS General Brockenridge for redeployment to the Pacific Theater. The ship left the harbor on 15 August with all aboard resigned to a long and tedious voyage through the Panama Canal to the Philippines, however, on 17 August, a scant half day past the Straits of Gibraltar, official notification came over the ship's loud speaker system that orders had been received changing the destination of the Brockenridge to New York Harbor. It is needless to remark that at this time the morale of all troops was exceptional. On 24 August, that never to be forgotten day, after nine days at sea the Brockenridge steamed slowly into New York Harbor in a steady drizzle which was insufficient to dampen the morale and high spirits of all men aboard.