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*General Order*  
ENBN-655-113 - General Order - 655th Engineer Topographic Battalion - 1943-1944

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Q. M. C. Form 353 (Old No. 490)  
Revised July 26, 1918

### LIST OF PAPERS

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*General Orders  
1 - 2*

GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 3-6788

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*ENBA-655-1.13*

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NOT DECLASSIFIED 735017 AUTHORITY BY: <u>LS</u> NARA DATE: <u>10-1-80</u>
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HEADQUARTERS  
 655th Engineer Topographic Battalion  
 Camp McCoy, Wisconsin.

2 January 1944

GENERAL ORDER )

NUMBER.....1 )

1. Under the provisions of AR 600-20, the undersigned hereby assumes command of the 655th Engineer Topographic Battalion, Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, effective this date.

*John E. Unverferth*  
 JOHN E. UNVERFERTH  
 Major, 655th Engr Top Bn,  
 Commanding.

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AUTHORITY  
BY: NARA DATE: 10/16/01

HEADQUARTERS  
655TH ENGINEER TOPOGRAPHIC BATTALION  
APO #314 c/o POSTMASTER  
NEW YORK CITY NEW YORK

28 December 1944

GENERAL ORDER )

NUMBER.....2 )

I. The 655th Engineer Topographic Battalion (Army) is reorganized under T/O & E 5-55 (Engineer Topographic Battalion (Army) ) dated 22 August 1944.

*John E. Unverferth*  
JOHN E. UNVERFERTH  
Lt Col., CE  
Commanding

UNCLASSIFIED  
 735011  
 AUTHORITY  
 BY NARA DATE 10/16/05

H E A D Q U A R T E R S  
 655TH ENGINEER TOPOGRAPHIC BATTALION  
 CAMP MCCOY, WISCONSIN

17 DECEMBER 1943

GENERAL ORDER )

NUMBER 1 )

1. ACTIVATION OF 655TH ENGINEER TOPOGRAPHIC BATTALION - In compliance with provisions of letter, Headquarters Second Army, AG 322.03-28 (GMEBF) Subject: Letter Orders No. A-365. (Activation of 655th Engineer Topographic Battalion), dated 9 December 1943, the 655th Engineer Topographic Battalion is activated as of 0001, 17 December 1943, with station at Camp McCoy, Wisconsin. This organization is assigned to Second Army and subsequently attached to 17th Detachment Special Troops.

2. ASSUMPTION OF COMMAND - Under authority contained in paragraph 6, AR 600-20, the undersigned hereby assumes command of the 655th Engineer Topographic Battalion, Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, effective this date.

*L. C. Kelsey, Jr.*  
 LEE C. KELSEY, JR.  
 Captain, ~~US~~  
 Commanding

DISTRIBUTION:

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- 2--CO Camp McCoy, Wis.
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Booklet - Hist 655th Eng'r Reg't Bn

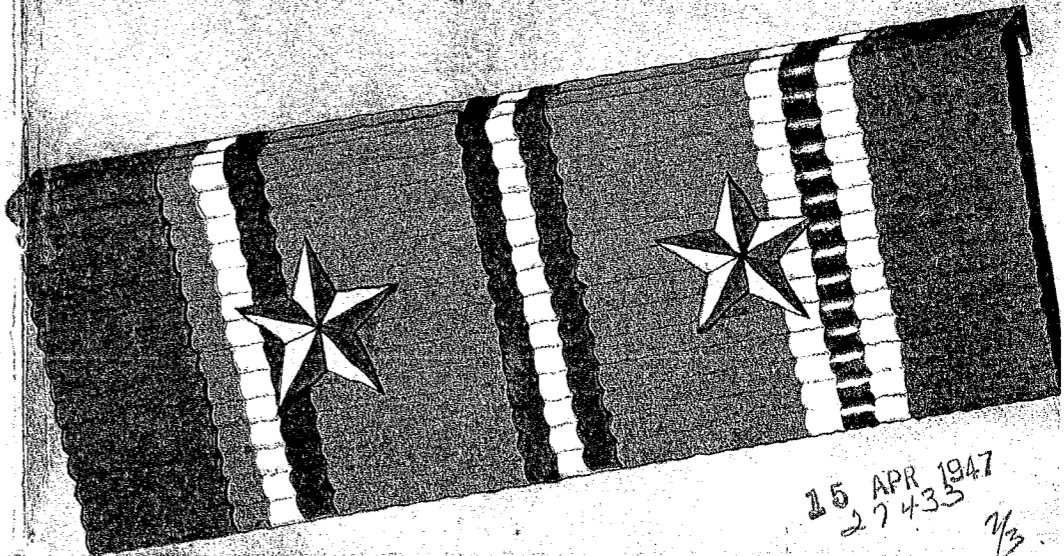


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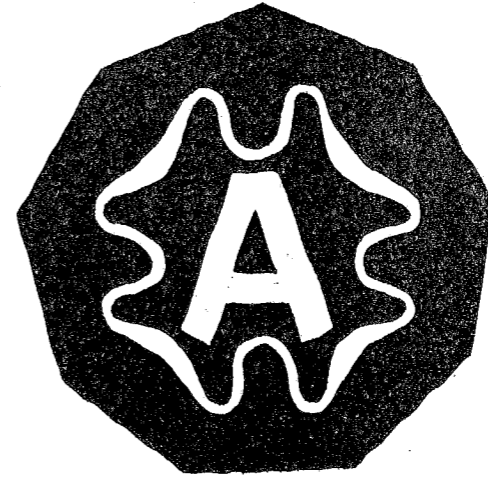
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## History 655th Engineer Topographic Battalion (Army)

The 655th Engineer Topographic Battalion was activated on the 17th of December 1943 at Camp McCoy, Wisconsin. The original cadre of twenty-eight men and one officer, selected for their particular qualifications as required to activate a technical unit of this type, emanated from the 650th Engineer Topographic Battalion, then stationed at Camp White, Oregon. Five officers, also drawn from correlated units over the U.S., arrived concurrently with the cadre.

The ranking officer of the group, Captain Lee C. Kelsey, Jr., formerly attached to the Porto Rico Department of Engineers as Executive Officer and in charge of all Mapping and Reproduction in that area and more recently from the Chief of Engineers Topographic Equipment and Maintenance School, in Chicago, Illinois, where he was in charge, assumed command of this nucleus Battalion.

Attached to the 17th Detachment Special Troops, 2nd Army, for administration and training, formation of the respective Companies of the Battalion was at once started in conformance with the prescribed Table of Organization, which provided for a Survey Company (Headquarters and Service Company), Photomapping Company (Company A), Reproduction Company (Company B), and a Medical Detachment. The overall organizational strength to be nineteen officers, three warrant officers and four hundred twenty-three enlisted men. Through the remainder of December the organization moved slowly. Only one recruit, Private Benjamin George Wurtzal, was added to the roster and his eyes started him off in the army with the false impression that all such menial chores as Kitchen Police, Fireman, Guard and the other details were performed by Master Sergeants, First Sergeants, Technical Sergeants and Staffs.

On the second of January 1944, Major John E. Unverferth, also from the 650th Engineer Topographic Battalion, reported for duty and to assume command of the Battalion with Captain Kelsey taking over

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the duties of Battalion Executive Officer. Other officers arriving were Captain Kulhan, Lt Hoxie, Lt Morey, Lt Macdonald, Lt Brannen, Lt Field, Lt Boyle, Lt Levy, Lt Konecky, Lt O'Reilly and Lt Yoos.

On the 5th of January 1944, the arrival of Company "A" of the 30th Engineer Topographic Battalion marked the first substantial gain in personnel strength to the new 655th Engineer Battalion. With the transfer of this entire unit of six officers and one hundred eighty-one Enlisted Men plus all their equipment, the new Battalion gained the services of highly trained surveyors, who for the past three years had been engaged in the topographic survey and mapping of North and South Carolina; the entire service personnel; and many photomapping and reproduction technicians who had been absorbed from respective units of the 30th Engineers before they departed for overseas. Further Officer gains at this time were Lieutenants Shannon, Gaeta, Ojdana, Crouch and Leonowicz.

The three companies began to take shape now. 1st Lt William Macdonald was appointed Company Commander of Headquarters and Service Company and 1st Sgt Leonard A. Kulpinski his first sergeant, 1st Lt Benjamin W. Hoxie was made Company Commander of Company "A" and Lucien E. Heroux the first sergeant, while over at Company "B", 1st Lt Wallace B. Powell and First Sergeant Elvin F. Cleaveland were assigned.

With the addition of so many survey and service personnel, Headquarters and Service Company was near full strength and had been fortunate to obtain many finely trained men with years of army experience behind them, but the problem in the other two companies was not so readily solved. The process of finding hand picked men from units all over the U.S. or drawing civilian trained personnel with the desired qualifications from the reception centers, was a slow one.

The first promotion to be made in the Battalion was given to one of the men of the original cadre, Master Sergeant Donald O. Mentzer, on the 5th of February, when he was appointed Warrant Officer Junior Grade and assigned to Battalion Headquarters as Assistant Operations Officer. Lt Macdonald, commanding Headquarters and Service Com-

pany, received his Captaincy on 14 February; Lt Moore on the same day being promoted to First Lieutenant.

The first promotion the enlisted personnel received was also announced this month, on the 25th, when Cpl Leon Towery was advanced to Technician Fourth Grade. As February ended the unit's strength had increased to twenty-five officers and three hundred and eight enlisted men. The Wisconsin winter was proving to be one of the mildest in many years. The thermometer had hit 20 below zero only twice and some of the old timers of the State said they were expecting the fruit trees to bud out any day now. Never the less, the War Department liked Wisconsin's record and the 655th was selected with other units at Camp McCoy to conduct experiments on GI winter clothing. Each guinea pig was fitted with a complete winter wardrobe of special wool OD trousers for wear underneath windproof cotton trousers, pile lined jackets to be worn under windproof cotton field jackets, pile lined helmets and a cotton cap with ear flaps, and finally, knee length wool socks for wear with rubber shoe packs with felt insoles. This multitude of layers took each man about thirty minutes extra to adorn himself every morning and the unpredictable weather practically always required a last minute change to be made after everyone was dressed and ready to "fall out". The assembly looked like an army of "Frankensteins", but the clothing was warm and the men were usually grateful for it in spite of the inconvenience. The Army was expanding faster than the Battalion and before basic training had officially started the 655th Engineer Topographic Battalion was called upon to furnish cadres for the formation of four additional Topographic Battalions that would also be stationed at Camp McCoy. On the 31st of March the 598th, 599th, 656th and the 657th Engineer Topographic Battalions were born, the quadruplets of the 655th. The addition of one hundred and four recruits to the 655th on this same date relieved the drain on the personnel of the Battalion and on the 10th of April the 655th was at last able to start its individual or "Basic" training period.

On the 14th of April, raise in grade was given to another Battalion

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Officer, Captain Kelsey, who on this date was promoted to Major, and Lieutenant Brannen on the same date being promoted to First Lieutenant. Near the end of April Lieutenants Clark and Efteland joined the unit followed in early May by Lieutenants Kleckner, Evans and McDermott. After the transfusion of skilled personnel to the newly formed Battalions the recruits that were left the 655th were almost as raw as the Wisconsin winter, but as a whole were mostly excellent technicians who as civilians had become specialists in the trades they were now to apply in the army, or they were youths, hand picked because of their intelligence and alertness and selected because they would most likely mould easily into the jobs of the technical nature they would finally be required to do in a Topographic unit.

The kids were breezing through the tougher physical aspects of the Basic and the oldsters quickly rounded into shape. Marches, Demolitions, Chemical Warfare, Close Order Drill and other training program requirements of this period were passed with high averages and with the coming of May the most enjoyable part of the Training Program had arrived — Rifle Marksmanship for Carbine, Cal 30 on Course A.

The first day on the range was an ideal grey day with no wind. Practice scores were extremely high, but with the next day — Record Day — the sun had come out with all its glare and a strong cross wind from three o'clock was blowing. However, the scores fell only slightly and the Battalion record was well above the average. Only two men failed to qualify and the following scores indicate how well "Kentucky Windage" was mastered:

#### SCORES

Company "B": Highest Score: Pfc George Hoffman 182  
(200 possible)

19 Experts  
30 Sharpshooters  
65 Marksmen

Company "A": Highest Score: Tec 4 Donald W. Stehley 185  
18 Experts

42 Sharpshooters

65 Marksmen

H&S Company: Highest Score: Pvt Donald R. Pomarius 183  
(Tie) Pvt Clinton A. Thomas 183

24 Experts

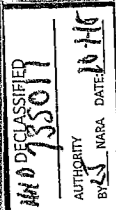
54 Sharpshooters

66 Marksmen

With the end of May, authorized strength had been passed and now numbered twenty-nine Officers and four hundred thirty-seven Enlisted Men. 1st Lt Fred B. Branen had replaced Lt Powell as Company Commander of Company "B", Master Sergeant Roy A. Valley accepted appointment as Warrant Officer Junior Grade and had been assigned to Battalion Headquarters as Personnel Officer, First Sergeant Leonard A. Kulpinski assumed Mr Valley's position as Sergeant Major and in turn was replaced in Headquarters and Service Company by S/Sgt William S. March.

The last phase of Basic was being entered upon with the coming of June and the training tempo was stepped up. Forced marches, bivouacs, compass problems, infiltration course and transition range firing were scheduled.

The Battalion's first bivouac fell due at this point of the schedule with the unit proceeding to the bivouac area by motor convoy. Lessons in air security were learned and upon arrival to the area every one was relieved upon the discovery that this part of Wisconsin was blessed with deep sandy soil especially suited to the quick digging of slit trenches and fox holes, while the thick overgreen woods simplified the problems of air security and camouflage. Lean-tos and other shelters had been constructed by another unit that had only recently vacated the same bivouac area and some of the lazier men took them over to sleep under, much to their sorrow later on in the night when torrential rains fell, soaking them thoroughly. This was probably the darkest night in history and the guards couldn't even find their reliefs. Some of the men who found it necessary to go but a short distance from their shelter halves during the course of the night had difficulty in finding their way back and some fell into the



water filled slit trenches. Many good lessons were learned on this first bivouac with the difficult weather conditions being a good teacher.

The Compass problem also proved to be a memorable occasion where many of the men got lost and ended up on the steep side of an old stone quarry or felt suspiciously off the course as they pushed through the heavy wooded areas, and ended up duly impressed with the importance of knowing how to use a compass properly. The termination of June found another oversight bivouac on the schedule. The men had learned the value of pitching the shelter half properly and the few errors previously made in camouflage and air security were corrected and the whole problem proved a great improvement over the previous bivouac and showed how well an earlier mistake contributes to later perfection.

The first two weeks in July found the Battalion finishing off its Individual Training Period and making preparation for the MTP test to follow.

On the 8th of July the Battalion was surprised and honored by a personal visit and tour of inspection of the Battalion by the Commanding General of the Army Ground Forces, Lt General Leslie McNair. The men were impressed by his informality, genuine interest and good sense of humor, while the General in turn rewarded the Battalion with his very high praise of the fine morale and excellent condition of the unit.

Individual Training was completed on the 17th of July and MTP tests were started by testing teams from 2nd Army Headquarters. The highlight of the tests was the tactical march and bivouac on the second day.

The day was one of the hottest of the season and the hot pavement of the road raised blisters on the feet ahead of schedule. Surprise air attacks and gas alarms necessitated the wearing of the gas mask much of the time and contributed to making an almost unbearable, fatiguing heat more so. The shady wooded area looked inviting and welcome to the weary Battalion, but looks were deceiving, as was soon discovered, when swarms of bird size mosquitos penetrated our

air defense to greet us. Many of the men were sick from the heat and everyone was defenseless against the mosquitos; some of the men walked about or dug their slit trenches with their mosquito netting over their heads. The cooks performed a miracle and had chicken with all the trimmings for supper and in spite of all the difficulties, every man did his job just as commendably. The final rating on all the tests surpassed all previous records of any 2nd Army Group yet tested, as the Battalion received the first rating of Excellent ever given.

Unit training started the day following the completion of the tests, but had to be suspended after one day with receipt of orders from higher headquarters that the Battalion was to transfer to Camp Livingston, Louisiana.

Major Kelsey assumed command of the Battalion as Major Unverferth and Captain Hoxie, with advance party, departed for Camp Livingston on the 20th of July.

All training was temporarily postponed while emphasis was placed on packing and processing of equipment for movement. At 1400, 24 July 1944, the entire Battalion, less the advance party, departed from Camp McCoy, Wisconsin for Camp Livingston, Louisiana. The Troop Train was divided into two sections; section one including all personnel of Company "B" and part of Company "A"; the second section carried the remainder of Company "A" and all personnel of Headquarters and Service Company.

At 1400, 26 July 1944, the Battalion arrived at Camp Livingston, Louisiana, intact except for the organization's Black Scotty mascot "Jerry", who must have decided that the outfit was getting "Too Hot" and went AWOL at Little Rock, Arkansas, while enjoying the wooded grandeur of the state. Efforts to apprehend the popular little AWOL were to no avail and Jerry has been unheard of since. The 655th's reception at Camp Livingston was a hot one, about 110° in the shade, in fact. Louisiana was starting one of the record breaking heatwaves of its history and our "winter guinea pigs" were having their difficulties with the sudden change. Several of the men, working in the heat, were overcome the first couple of days but soon everyone was

as nearly acclimated to such conditions as could reasonably be expected.

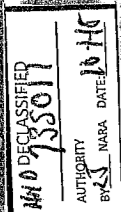
Disregarding the unusual weather of Camp Livingston, it was not such a bad spot. Long leaf pine trees were scattered through the whole Camp area giving off a fresh aroma and probably furnished the reason for the fact that the mosquitos expected in Louisiana were not present. The quarters were small mountain type "huts", as they were called, each one accomodated about four men and was equipped with a large natural gas heater in the center of the single room. The heater was not a very attractive fixture during the summer but later, when the cool early fall mornings started, they proved very welcome and efficient.

The Battalion strength had swelled to twenty-two officers and four hundred thirty-nine enlisted men as August set in. Lieutenants Shannon and Morey were appointed First Lieutenants. Equipment had been quickly set up and unit training resumed. The first job under the new training program was a revision of existing 1:125,000 planimetric maps of the Louisiana Maneuver Area and were to be used for the forthcoming seventh Maneuver Period. Also to be prepared, was an original planimetric map, scale 1:250,000, of the maneuver area, based on photographic and control data only; using aerial photos flown by the Third Tactical Air Command that was stationed nearby at DeRidder Field. Once again, on the fifteenth of August, the 655th was called upon to furnish a cadre, the fifth since activation. The cadre consisted of one officer and eighteen enlisted men and formed the foundation of the 681th Engineer Topographic Company Corps. Mechanics and Drivers of the Battalion were awarded Motor Vehicle Drivers' and Mechanics' Awards on the nineteenth, and on the twenty-third of the month 1st Lt Yoos was appointed Battalion Motor Officer. On the twenty-fifth of August, the Technical Section of the unit gave a demonstration to a group, consisting mostly of high school teachers, attending a Pre-Induction Training Conference. Technical Training was once again interrupted when on the eighth of September the Battalion was alerted and ordered to make preparations for overseas movement. The newly prescribed training pro-

gram was to be a strenuous one covering the firing of individual weapons and crew-served weapons, and combat tactics, including a one month tactical bivouac in the vicinity of Pollock, Louisiana. Coincident with the alert was the immediate interest of Higher Headquarters in the unit. Colonel Troland and Major Hanson, conducted an inspection and conference with this Battalion on the thirteenth, in regards to this Battalion's mission and its preparation for overseas duty.

On the next day the Battalion enjoyed the distinction of having its second General make a tour of inspection. Commanding General of the Fourth Army, Major General LUCAS, and his staff made the inspection, giving particular attention to the technicalities of map reproduction. Later in the day, at Theatre Number One, The General gave an address to all the officers of the Fourth Army who were stationed at this post.

On the twenty-fifth of September 1944 the entire Battalion left Camp Livingston by motor convoy to proceed to a bivouac area near Pollock, Louisiana. The bivouac was to continue for one month, under a tactical situation during the hours up to 2000, at which time the situation was changed to a non tactical basis for the showing of training films. The weather was bad and ground directly opposite from the sandy soil of Wisconsin. Every species of poisonous snake found in the U.S. is found in Louisiana and the rains induced them all to come out and convince those who may have doubted it, that the Chamber of Commerce was not misrepresenting the fact. There were also three different varieties of poison ivy or poison oak, so, just in case you knew what one variety looked like, there would be two others to get you. There's always something good about anything however, and some of the men were fortunate to be due furloughs after two weeks in the field and were granted them at this time. At night after the tactical situation had ceased, there was bottled beer, and the training pictures shown at this time were frequently interesting, in spite of their technical nature. During this month long bivouac, the handling and throwing of live grenades and the firing of the bazooka and rifle grenade familiarized



the men with these weapons and taught the due respect to them that should be shown.

The night infiltration course was also run at this time, and where the day infiltration course had not convinced some of the men of the importance of keeping the fanny down, the visible streaking and ricocheting tracers of the machine guns employed in the night course were more convincing and everyone's pocket had dipped gravel before the finish line.

Machine gun crews had departed under the charge of Lt Gaeta to the Indianola Firing Range at Magnolia Beach, Texas, where both .50 and .30 calibre machine guns were fired at moving targets, and when the Battalion returned to its base area in Camp Livingston on the fourteenth of October, it was a wiser and more competent group in both tactical knowledge and the proper use of Weapons.

An Air Ground test was conducted on the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth of October, using actual planes in the problem for the first time. P40's assumed the roll of the enemy and impressively demonstrated how quickly a group of planes can come out of the sun or hedge hop onto a motor convoy and catch them completely by surprise even though an alerted Air Security is maintained. The only casualty was two hundred pounds plus Tec 4 Dooley of Company "B" who sprained his ankle when he momentarily forgot himself during the excitement of one of the strafing attacks and attempted to make like a Gazelle out of one of the trucks. At 1610 the convoy stopped and when the dust was shaken from everyone's eyelashes the Bivouac area came into view. If anyone had thought the ground at the last bivouac area was hard they quickly admitted their mistake here when entrenching tools started vainly scraping at fox holes and slit trenches. At 0300 the next morning the scratching shovels and unsuppressed oaths could still be heard as each man still sweated in his individual stone quarry. The P40's were up early this morning too, but good defenses and camouflage were ready and the advantages of the backbreaking work was realized and appreciated by the demonstration of the simulated attacks. Camp was broken at 1400 and the motor convoy continued back towards the Battalion Area, still under air alert but wiser from

the lessons learned the day before and the enemy P40's were unable to surprise the convoy this time. A rating of Satisfactory was received as the test ended.

Preparations had been made for the Army Inspector General and the War Department Inspector General. Colonel Mueller of the War Department Inspector General's office was the first of the Inspector group to arrive. After his inspection of the Battalion on the twenty-fifth of October a rating of Satisfactory was given. On the thirtieth, the Fourth Army Inspector General, Colonel Petty, made his tour of inspection and also gave the unit a rating of Satisfactory. The same grade was received in Physical Fitness Tests which were also given this month. Packing, processing and crating for overseas shipment of equipment had passed its peak now and "Last Chance" furloughs were being issued. November saw the packing finished and a relaxation period of organized athletics and recreation was enjoyed.

The "Over Seas" Advance Party for unit 5486-P, consisting of Lt O'Reilly, WOJG Valley and S/Sgt Farley, departed for Ft Hamilton, New York on the thirteenth of November.

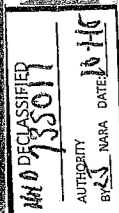
Major Unverferth had just returned from his leave of absence and resumed command of the Battalion when two days later his efficiency was officially recognized and he was promoted to the grade of Lieutenant Colonel, effective date of rank, 15 November 1944.

Lieutenant Anderson, who had joined in late October was kept busy with final medical examinations prior to the forthcoming big move.

On the eighteenth, Supply Officer, Captain Kulhan departed to N.Y.P.E. on temporary duty as Supply Representative of the organization prior to its departure for overseas.

Thanksgiving came as usual this year, on the twenty-third to be exact, and though no one felt particularly thankful, appetites were not noticeably affected. Every mess sergeant had been furnished all the necessities of the traditional dinner and each kitchen tried its darnedest to out do the others in preparing it. Each Company picked the bones and on full, satisfied stomachs agreed that their particular mess sergeant had succeeded.

On the twenty-fourth of November the command of Company "B"



changed over to 1st Lt John J. Williams as 1st Lt Branen was transferred to Battalion to assume the duties of Battalion Adjutant, replacing Lieutenant Clark.

Preparations for overseas movement were completed on the twenty-seventh of November and the Battalion departed by troop train for Camp Shanks, New York at 2100 on the following day. The weather was appropriate for the occasion — Rain! The Troop Train arrangement was comfortable, with the eight man compartments for day travel convertible into comfortable bunks arranged in tiers of three for the night. Meals were eaten from mess kits in the compartments during the trip and were brought through the respective coaches by KPs. The trip was made more enjoyable because duties were light, time was used as pleased, with most of the men reading or playing poker (for matches). The dullness of the trip was also relieved by the Red Cross Clubs that met the trains at several of the towns enroute, the pretty faces usually doing more for morale than the coffee, cookies or magazines that they gave. Three days later, on the thirtieth of November, at 1705, the train arrived at Camp Shanks Staging Area, New York. That is, everyone thought it was Camp Shanks, but it was still a long hike, a good mile and a half that seemed like a hundred and up hill all the way. Veterans of two and three days at the camp cheered the Battalion along its march with such encouraging remarks as "You won't like it here!" — "Boy, they're really scraping the barrel now!" "Hey, fellows, this is IT!" and other popular ones that no one yet understood the meaning of, such as; "Don't forget your SPOON!"

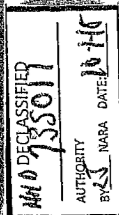
The Barracks assigned to the Battalion were directly on top of the hill and though the night was clear, there was a sharp wind and it was cutting cold. The only warming sight was the distant lights of New York City and the clearly visible Empire State, but all these could have been a million miles away for the complete unit was restricted. The barracks were wooden and hastily thrown together, long, with eighteen double decker bunks on each side, signatures and dream girls predominated the scribbling on the walls and two potbellied stoves, with no fuel in sight, completed the picture.

Processing was fast and efficient and by the third day twelve hour passes to New York were being issued to half the personnel. The next day the remainder of the Battalion received their passes, then-  
RESTRICTION again.

Three years to the day after Pearl Harbor the 655th Engineer Topographic Battalion was ready to ship out and a 1330 the next day, eighth of December 1944, the first man of the Battalion stepped up to the gang plank. The Transportation Corps Checker called out, "Maclaga". A weak voice answered, "John!" and S/Sgt John Maclaga started up the plank that grew heavier as the line of the 655th men followed up to the deck of the nameless ship, known only at this time as NY774. Tec 4 Frederick Hettinger was still muttering something about "We'll never leave Wilson!" as he trudged under his duffel bag, and about twelve minutes later, struggling with his load of Battalion records, Tec 4 Donald R. Heckman, the last Enlisted Man to leave the States started up the plank, The Colonel, satisfied that all were "Present, and On Board!", followed close behind.

The winding, wooden stairways that went down into the ship, were narrow and seemingly endless. Level "D" was as deep as one could go without cutting a hole in the bottom of the vessel and it was here that Headquarters and Service Company and most of Company B stopped. Company A and the remainder of Company B, filled compartments on each side of the vessel, one level higher, in compartment "C". Men, packs and duffel bags were set down on table tops of what seemed to be a mess hall and when an Officer came in and said "OK men, try and make yourselves as comfortable as possible — This is your home for the next two weeks! You will eat, sleep and everything else right here, for the whole voyage!" Everyone knew he was kidding, — but he wasn't!

The ship was English, and the English had figured the capacity of each compartment according to the number of men that could be seated at the tables. The figuring was very close and if one table happened to draw a man with a wider than standard beam, somebody at that table would probably have to sit on the floor. Everyone was wondering how they would sleep and at nightfall the arrangement





was explained. Hammocks were staggered from ceiling hooks, mattresses were issued to the other men who were to sleep on the table tops, under the tables and in the aisles between the tables, an ingenious plan, which contributed to the ships early christening by the men as "His Majesty's Tub, Sardine Can!" Evidently the English had also planned there would be about three sleep walkers in each compartment, for after the mattresses were issued, this number found themselves without mattress or hammock. Sailing time was secret and few men were awake to waue "Good-Bye" to Miss Liberty when the vessel pulled away from the dock at 0330, 9th December 1944.

From the first day out many of the men learned the meaning of "Mal de Mer", but December proved to be a good sailing month and the sea was unusually calm during most of the voyage. Once out to sea, the Ship's more romantic name was learned to be "HMT, Esperance Bay" but the more appropriate name given by the men still stuck.

The convoy did not reach full convoy strength until more ships joined the group off the coast of Nova Scotia, which made the convoy number twenty-two ships and six escorts for the crossing of the Atlantic.

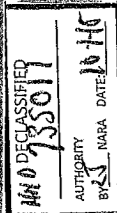
The seventeenth of December was the first birthday of the Battalion, which was spent aboard ship. There was no cake and no celebration, in fact, very few men knew what date it was or even cared. Home and mail calls were being silently missed, but good old American "Chow" was more loudly missed. Few of the men, if any, could appreciate the "green" liver or other absolutely unidentifiable conglomerations that turned up for breakfast and the other meals — one look at a meal by a seasqueamish man he became a "Rail Bird".

A crap game had been going on the rear deck since the beginning of the voyage and had by this time grown to huge proportions. "The Chink" from another Engineer outfit on board, was winning all the money, but everyone seemed to be getting it from a well someplace and everybody was always "faded". During the evenings, Pvt Albert Moffa, contributed to upholding the morale by setting up the projector and showing the Special Service movies that had been brought along. Everybody enjoyed the pictures and sweated and inhaled the thick smoke of the close compartment where they were held. They

even sat through "Knicker-bocker Holiday". Special Service did a swell job on the ship and besides having movies for the trip, sporting events and ship's talent shows were held daily on the forward deck. They even printed a Souvenir Booklet of the trip and saw to it that every man received a copy.

The dangers that every man thought about but never mentioned, didn't happen and the trip went uneventful until when just off the Coast of Wales the first "Sub Alert" was sounded. Signal whistles beeped and the ships reformed quickly into their prearranged battle formation. There were three other "Troop Ships" in the convoy. The large clean grey one "Where the Wacs were!" took the position on our right, the 'camouflaged job" fell in more closely to our left and the other one which also carried the Convoy Commander assumed the lead just in front of our ship. A zig-zag, quickly changing course, was taken and two escort Destroyers closed in from the front and rear and cut back and forth through the convoy. There were a few ash cans dropped and a bit of gunfire in the distance. One sub was rumored as sunk, but no one saw it nor knew where the rumor originated. There had been no outward sign of excitement and even the crap gam went on as usual. "The Chink" had dropped his winnings now, was "busted" and borrowing with little luck. Most of the chips were now in the hands of the 655th and land was now in sight and it looked as if the "dough" was going to stay there. The next morning the convoy split. Our group continued towards the north, the others towards the east and LeHavre, possibly. During the night our ship had docked and when the men came up on deck, the morning fog only partly revealed the huge cranes, the moving tugs, the docked Liberty Ships and the bustle of the Port of Debarkation — "Avonmouth, England!" Things didn't look much different here than they are in the States, but the tiny box cars were laughed at and the grateful appreciation of an American cigarette was unexpected.

By afternoon the "TAT" had been unloaded from the hold of the ship and men and luggage were next. The Battalion personnel was hustled off to the small but comfortable European type compartment coaches where the Red Cross was waiting with the traditional doughnuts and



hot coffee, plus the pleasant, democratic and pretty girls that go with it. Morale was high, everyone was curious about this new country and enjoyed giving away their "K" rations to the kids that crowded outside the train wanting "gum" or "what have you?" when stops were made at Bristol and other towns along the way. Just past midnight, twenty-second of December, the Troop Train arrived at Verwood, England, where men were transferred to trucks waiting there. The weather was warmer than expected for December, there was no snow but there was mud and it was deep, slippery and sloppy when the group dismounted at their new camp in the ETO, Nine Yews, Cranborne, Dorset, England. Not everyone knew just what a Yew tree looked like and the huge, bare Beech trees, that disappeared into the blackness and composed the small strip of forest that provided security for the little camp of Nissen Huts were mistaken by many as the Yew trees from which the camp must have derived its name. The fact was, however, that the Manor House, stables and estate that was known as "Nine Yews" was originally a racing stable and country estate of Lord Cranborne and had derived the name "Nine Yews" from the nine original Yew trees that were planted in the front and on the sides of the manor house many years past. The original nine had multiplied to many dozen through the years and these giant, graceful evergreens enhanced the whole front of the large red brick Manor House now used as Battalion Headquarters and Officers' Barracks for the 655th Engineers. The Christmas Holiday season had arrived but the Christmas spirit that existed was a far cry from the spirit felt at other Christmas seasons in the States. Every man was determined to make the best of the unfavorable circumstances however, and the Holly Trees and Yew branches caught their imagination, and Holly Wreathes began to show in the windows and on the doors, sprigs of evergreen brightened the drab walls. Tiny Yew trees appeared in the huts, decorated with varicolored Life Savers, pieces of red colored paper torn from the inside covers of Mystery Novels or "Ellery Queen" Detective Stories. Cellophane from cigarettes and silver paper from candy made streamers and icicles, and for snow, GI foot powder made a swell substitute. The

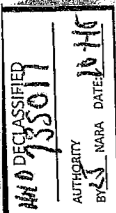
cooks were having their problems on how to cook the many turkeys provided and finally resorted to taking them into Cranborne, where the gladly obliging baker cooked them and had them ready for Christmas Day. The meal was a credit to the resourcefulness of the unit kitchen. Turkey, dressing, cranberry sauce and every other tradition of the Christmas Dinner were present, prepared as well as if by a chef in the finest kitchen — Only the impossible was missing.

Activity of the Battalion was now the reassembling of equipment and supplies for the next move into the Theatre of Operations. Colonel Unverferth, Major Kelsey and Lieutenant O'Reilly and Tec 5 Parker, departed for London on Official Business as Lieutenant Yoos, Tec 4 Smith, Private Samuelson and Private Wysoczanski went to Avonmouth to arrange the pickup and transportation of the Vans, Trucks and Technical Equipment. Everything was rechecked as it arrived at Nine Yews and was recreated and packed when necessary. Every member of the Battalion was kept busy, but time for relaxation was still provided for by arrangements for every man to visit London on two day passes at some time during the Battalions stay in England. In the evenings, trucks were provided for six hour passes to the nearby Cathedral Town of Salisbury and the Channel Resort City of Bournemouth.

The snow had began to fly with the coming of January. All of the Equipment sent from the United States with the exception of nine generators had arrived safely. Everything had been rechecked, was found to have stood the trip well and was in excellent condition. Shortages and additional requirements for the new move were drawn from nearby engineer, quartermaster and ordnance depots. The advance party to the continent, departed on the nineteenth of January 1945, composed of Major Kelsey, Captain Konecky, Lieutenants Morey, Evans and Ojdana.

Loading of the equipment for movement to the port was made more difficult by a driving blizzard. Little sleep was had by anyone now as loading continued through two days and nights. One man, Tec 4 Theron Bonzo, slipped on the ice and was seriously injured when a huge crate fell on him. He refused to go to the hospital when he

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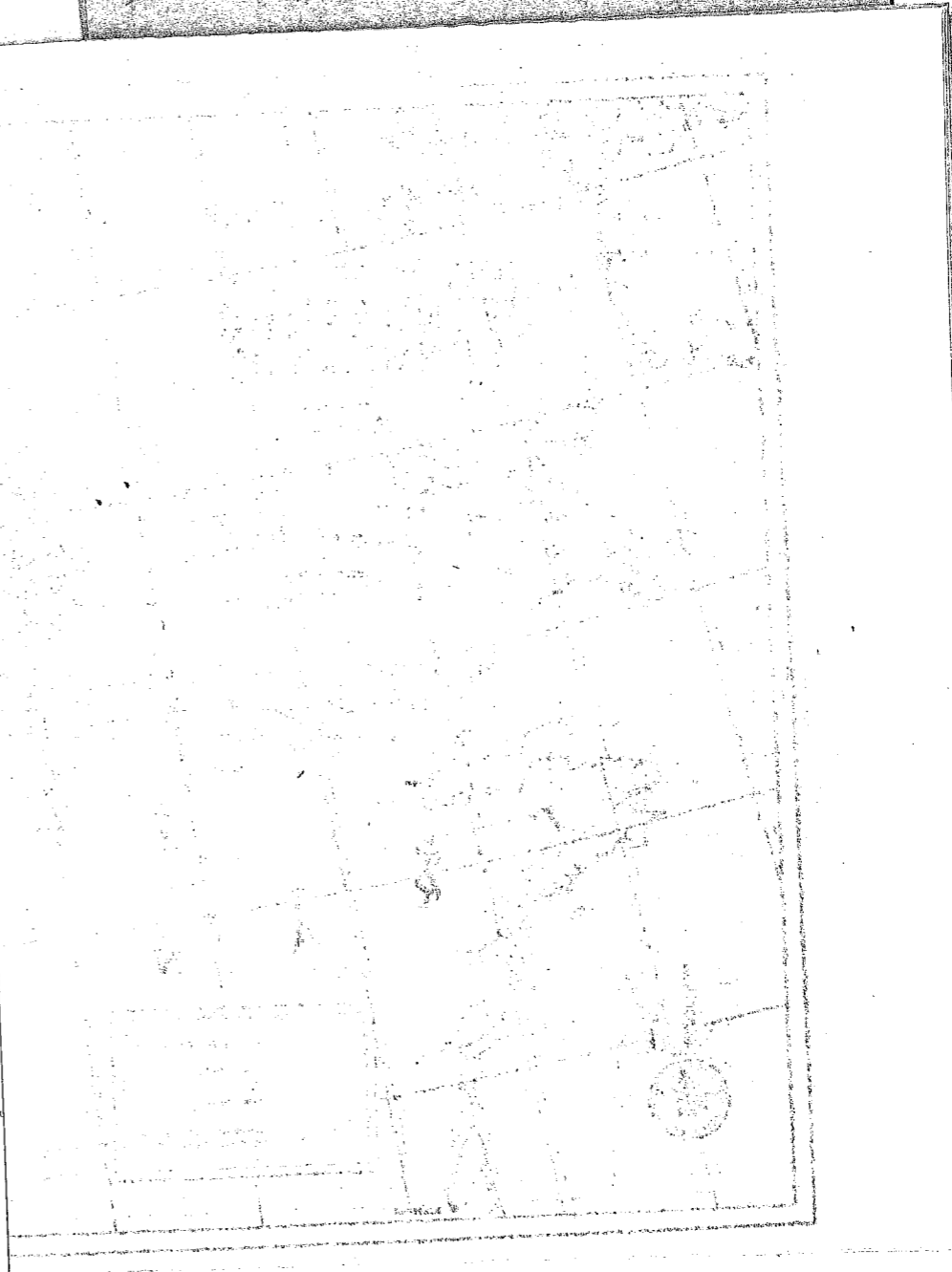


was assured no bones were broken and with the aid of his buddies was helped to gamely depart with the Battalion.

The unit was divided into two sections for the move. On the morning of the twenty-eighth the 655th Engineers departed from Nine Yews. Motor vehicles and organizational equipment left by motor convoy while personnel were carried by trucks as far as Verwood, where they entrained to proceed to Southhampton and Camp Hursley Marshalling Area; both sections arrived the same date as their departure from Nine Yews. The next day the Motor Pool Personnel with unit vehicles and equipment left Camp Hursley to be loaded on a U. S. Liberty Ship and not to rejoin the unit again until reaching the next Assembly Area.

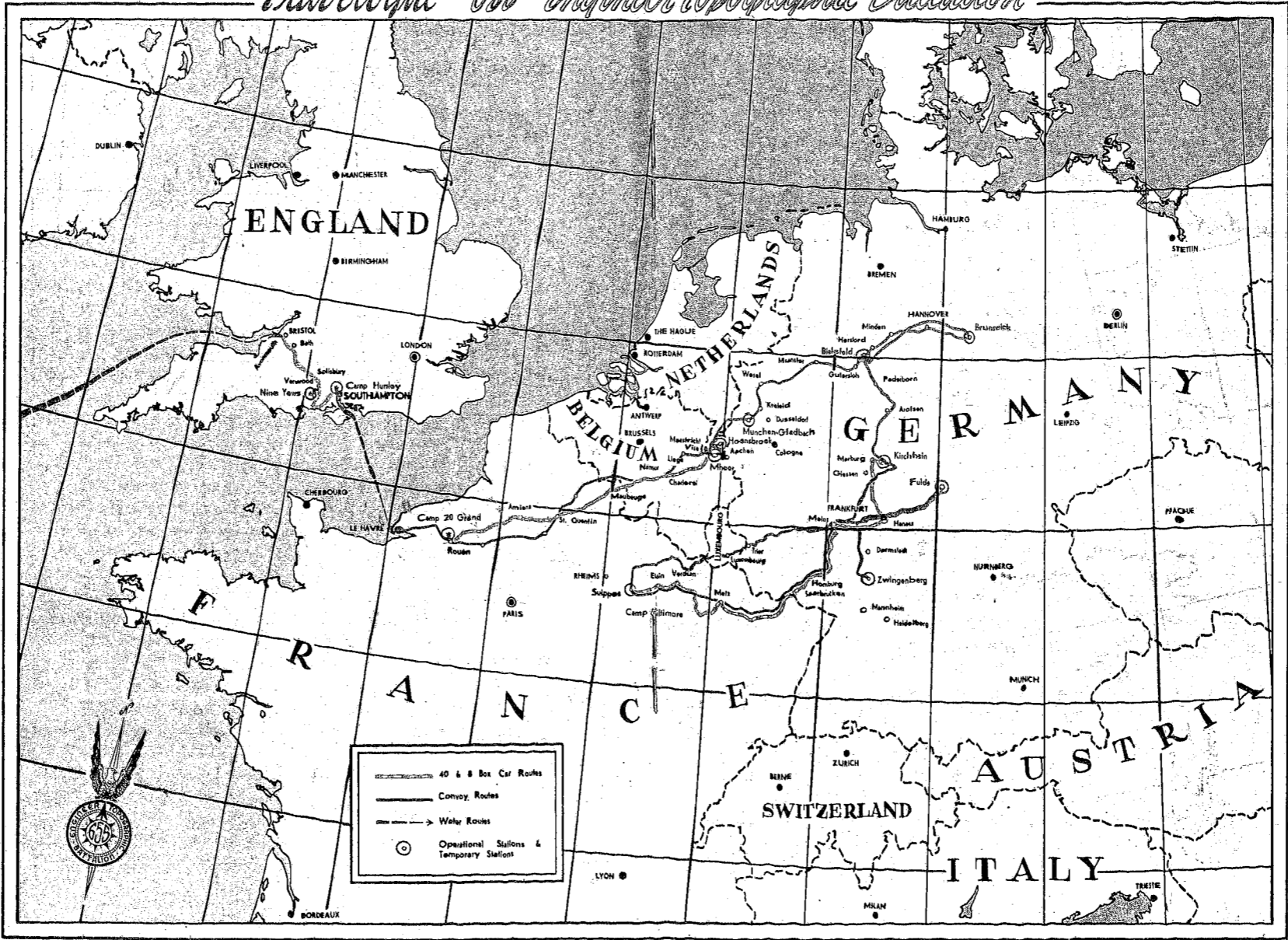
On the thirtieth of January the Battalion Personnel arrived by motor transport at the Southampton Port of Embarkation, loading onto the New Zealand Transport, Monoawai for the Channel crossing. The Monoawai was a larger vessel than the Esperance Bay but accommodations were very similar. The channel was in one of its very rare moods and was almost as peaceful as a lake. The smooth uneventful trip terminated the next day, thirty-one January, at LeHavre, France.

The port was a shambled example of proficient marksmanship of the Allies, and debarkation was made possible by a newly constructed, but as yet uncompleted, sectional pontoon dock. Huge personnel carrier trucks were waiting to load the unit which proceeded through the night to Camp Twenty Grand (Red Horse Assembly Area), formerly occupied by the Germans. This was a tent city and as usual, when the Battalion moved anywhere it was raining. The truck driver couldn't find our area but must have heard from somewhere that we were map makers, so let everyone unload from the trucks, "Only about a quarter of a mile away", he said, and look for it. The wind was now blowing at a gale and most of the tents were flapping loosely in the driving rain when the area was located. On awakening, the next wet morning, it was learned that chow was served here but twice a day, probably because the world's record longest chow line didn't allow much more time for any more. At times the food was good but always it was inadequate. The troops seemed to grow fat on "Bitching" and they got plenty of that. At night the guards all



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over the area were "trigger happy" and at first made some wonder if the place was under attack. Otherwise, there was no indication that the Battalion had moved any closer to the front. The motor pool and accompanying personnel had disembarked and unloaded motor equipment at Touen on the first of February and rejoined the unit at Twenty Grand on the third. The Battalion was now assigned to the Fifteenth Army and was inactive, awaiting further orders. New orders finally arrived and on the eighth the Motor Pool Convoy departed. The Battalion Personnel left for the entraining point the next day.

All personnel were present at the entraining station, which fact proved that none of them, up to this point, had ever heard of a Forty and Eight, which, might be termed: A modern chamber of torture, designed to look like a box car, but when in movement simulates a concrete mixer-repels no known element and would make a rush hour subway car look as roomy as Pennsylvania Station. The railroad station was crowded with French civilians of all ages, whose enthusiasm might be questioned as to whether it was for the "Liberation" or for the cigarettes and chocolate (then valued on the Black Market at one hundred francs the pack or bar) that was given away or exchanged to them for very bad cider (that could be bought anywhere for ten francs).

About sunset, the last protruding G-I had been forced back into the crowded boxcars and the train made its jerky departure. With nightfall the problem arose as to how to convert "Standing Room Only" into a feather bed for each man? No one attached to the group understood the principles of levitation, so the more conventional "Cord Wood" system was used. Arguments naturally came up as to who should sleep on the bottom of the pile and keep warm or sleep on top of the stack and get wet from the rain. Also where was "IT?" and if it were "Just outside the Door!" "How much time was allowed for stops?" Obviously with so many problems somebody was eventually caught! After a refreshing night's sleep everyone was glad to get up, look for his own arms and legs, sort them out from the pile, wake them up too and inspect their working order. The train had raced over the tracks that night for some ten or twelve

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miles and now that everybody was relieved that they had not missed much of the scenery during the night, the big problem was breakfast and whether to have "Meat and Beans?" — "Vegetable Stew?" or "Eggs with Ham?" and whether to eat them "frozen" or "Smoked warm by a heating unit?" Soon, satisfied, and with a full stomach, no one had anything else to do but sit down on one of his buddies, relax and watch "La Belle France", slightly rearranged by bombs, flash by at times as fast as twenty miles per hour.

The French people were very friendly and would mob around the train wherever it stopped. Even the smallest child was learning English and could say cute phrases like "Cigarette for Papa" or "Chocolate for Mama?" — few of the men could turn them down. The Belgians seemed more sincerely friendly than the French, probably because their Liberation had been more recent and they had not had the opportunity to become accustomed to the Americans as the French. At one stop the children had been sent down to greet the train with bottled beer, the best tasted since leaving the States. Another time the grownups themselves greeted the men with hot coffee (a rationed and difficult item to get), loaves of bread, fruit and good wine. Some cheerful citizen, usually one of the attractive Belgian girls, was always standing in a door-way or thrusting her head from an open window to wave and smile, a few of them even cried. This genuine demonstration of gratitude made every man feel that here was something that was actually worth fighting for. At Liege, "Buzz Bombs" began to become evident overhead for the first time since London. We were told that they averaged one every five minutes here and our destination was now very close by. Night had fallen when the train made its last bumpy stop, on the twelfth of February, at Vise, Belgium. A tired, dirty bunch fell out of the cussed little cars and into the Battalion's own trucks, which had arrived the day before and were waiting to take the group to the end of the journey.

Battalion Command Post and Headquarters and Service Company set up at a chateau in Altembrouck, Belgium, with Company B and Company A proceeding to Castle Mheer in Holland.

The castle was a huge structure, typical of so many other similar

castles in Europe; impressive on the outside and depressive on the inside. It had belonged to a modern Mata Hari, Countess Von Loe, who had fled back into Germany when the fall of Belgium and Holland became evident. The rooms that had once housed Nazis who studied maps to defeat the Allies, was now housing Americans who were to produce maps to defeat those same Nazis.

Urgent work was to be done. The whole unit was set up without a loss of momentum. Almost like magic maps began to roll off the presses, ready for distribution to Ninth US Army Headquarters to which the Battalion had now been assigned. The 655th was at last performing its primary mission. Map Storage and Distribution moved to Maastricht, Holland to be near Ninth Army Headquarters, which was now located there. The whole Battalion was operating under twelve hour shifts. At night the flashes could be seen and the ground vibrations felt as the night bombers softened up Julich and Cologne. The enemy was not very close physically but the importance of the job to be done by the Battalion group was strongly felt among the personnel and the first month over 3,000,000 impressions rolled off the 655th Engineer Topographic Battalion presses.

The Allies were pushing the Germans across the Rhine now and on the first of March, moving with the offensive, the 655th was ordered to proceed to Hoensbroek, Holland. The move was a short one and was so smoothly executed that the Battalion was moved and producing advanced area maps again on the same day.

Map Storage and Distribution had remained behind at Maastricht. The rest of the Battalion was divided into three groups for operational and tactical reasons. Battalion Headquarters and Company B set up operations and billets in the St. John's School on Hoofstraat, Headquarters and Service Company occupied the St. Antonius and H. Hart School on Juliana-Bernhard Laan — and Company A set up in a residential building "Lomahuis" on Battingstraat, a former German Officer's Club.

As the Battalion was getting settled here, on the second of March, it was visited by Colonel Milne.

The buildings were steamed heated, clean, and all details, except keeping the immediate sleeping quarters in order, were done by

Holland Nazi Collaborators. Hot showers, for the first time since arrival on the continent, were available at the Local Coal Mine, the Staatzijn Emma.

Operating within a town was something new to the Battalion and a great stimulant to morale. Bars were open, selling excellent draught beer; barber shops were numerous that gave a haircut and shave for only thirty-five cents in Dutch money (equivalent to about thirteen cents in US currency) and the clean Dutch shops were mobbed by the men on their off hours, buying souvenirs that were available.

The townspeople were very friendly and grateful to the Americans, and the Civil Affairs Committee, with the cooperation of a group of the socially prominent girls of the community, the equivalent of our Junior League at home, held a Dance in honor of the 655th Engineers. Dancing was from 2000 to 2300 with very good music furnished by local Musicians who asked for nothing for their services but smokes, chocolate or soap. The bar was kept open and draught beer was served as refreshment. Any romantic ideas the men had built up were forestalled by the Committee, as waiting trucks hustled the girls off immediately as the dance broke up.

Plans for crossing the Rhine were fast developing and on the seventh of March, Headquarters and Service Company furnished two survey parties to work with the 145th Engineer Combat Group at the Venlo Bridge site. On the tenth of March, Map Storage and Distribution moved from Maastricht to Munchen-Gladbach, Germany, across the Rhine from Dusseldorf. On the eleventh, twelfth and fourteenth Headquarters and Service Company, Company A and Company B followed in the Company groups in that order. On the thirteenth of March the first seventy-two hour combat rest passes to Paris were granted, twenty men falling into the Lucky group.

Munchen-Gladbach was mostly in ruins except for a small section on the outskirts of the town where the Battalion stopped to occupy and set up operations in a hastily deserted textile factory, bearing the name of Schwartz and Klein and many other soul inspiring phrases painted on its outer walls, such as: "Deutschland über Alles" "Heil Hitler!" and "Ein Fuehrer — ein Deutschland!"

The huge cold factory was used as living quarters for a couple of days, after which apartment houses and homes were cleaned out and occupied, using the factory for Battalion Headquarters, Operations and Mess Hall only. At about the same time the 655th "Million Dollar Theatre" was constructed. Bolt after bolt of cloth, that would have been priceless back in the countries looted by the Germans, was stretched from floor to ceiling across and back down to the floor to black out a huge auditorium. Here a large screen was made, the Battalion sixteen MM projector set up and movies, drawn from the Special Service Film Library, were shown. The first movie shown was "Four Jills and a Jeep" with Carol Landis, Kay Francis, Mitzi Mayfair and Marthe Raye. Some others shown were: "The Conspirators" with Hedy L. Marr, "To Have and Have Not" with Humphry Bogart, "Andy Hardy's Blonde Trouble" with Mickey Rooney and other first features.

Headquarters and Service Company was called upon on March seventeen to perform survey work in the vicinity of Julich and locate concrete German anti-tank gun emplacements. On the twenty-fourth another survey party was called to the front for special duty with the 1143 Engineer Combat Group, as D-Day crossings of the Rhine were executed. Two days later, four men, the first Enlisted Men to join the Battalion overseas, were assigned to the small personnel of Company "B" in an effort to relieve the pressure on the small company. With the end of March the unit received its first pay day in Germany, in newly issued Allied Military Government German Marks. The first of April was Easter Sunday. Catholic services were held at St. Elisabeth's Church in the Ninth Army Forward Area in Munchen-Gladbach. Protestant Services were held in the Opera House Theatre, also in Munchen-Gladbach. The Easter evening movie was "Strike up the Band" with Judy Garland and Mickey Rooney. Fifteen promotions of Enlisted Men were announced for the Battalion with officer promotions throughout the year bringing raises in grade to Lieutenants Anderson, O'Reilly, Ojdana, Williams, Gaeta, Clark and Evans.

On the fifth, the Battalion was advised a deeper move into Germany was imminent and Major Kelsey and a detachment departed to look

for a new location, probably in Munster or Haltern. Due to excessive damage to these cities as well as to Hannover, no suitable location for a Topographic unit of the size of the 655th was available. The next move was therefore designated beyond these points to Bielefeld, Germany. Map Storage and Distribution moved to Gutersloh, Germany on the ninth of April. Company B, Battalion Operations (less Kodaline Section) and Medical Detachment departed for Bielefeld on the tenth of April. Battalion Headquarters followed to Bielefeld the next day and on the twelfth Headquarters and Service Company and Company A left Munchen Gladbach for the same destination. The Bielefeld sation, known as "Langemark Kaserne", proved to be one of the many excellently constructed and equipped German Regimental Camps. The group of red brick buildings consisted of four principal buildings constructed around a huge parade grounds about the size of our regulation foot-ball field. All buildings were in excellent condition, inside and out, with tiled floors and plastered walls. The building on the front, or south side, was a two story structure that embodied a complete modern kitchen and mess hall, a bar and a well stocked wine cellar. The second floor was used by Company A for drafting and photomapping operations. The three story building on the west side was slightly smaller than the two buildings on the east side and had been used by the Germans for offices and a completely equipped dispensary. This building was assigned to Company B; the second and third floors as barracks, the first floor used by Battalion Operations, while the dispensary was naturally given to the Medical Detachment. Only the first of the two larger buildings on the east was used by the battalion. Battalion Headquarters was located on the first floor and Headquarters and Service Company was assigned the remainder of the first floor and all of the second floor for barracks with the third floor being occupied by Company A. The other large building was found to be "Booby-Trapped and placed "Off Limits" to the Battalion. Bordering the parade grounds on the north side was a large theatre building, complete with sound and double projectors in perfect working condition and a full size screen, easily in view from any part of the auditorium which seated about seven hundred. Further to the rear

and bordered and connected by wide concrete driveways was a long "U" shaped, garage, shop, ordnance and technical building. This was a single story unit about one hundred fifty yards long on each wing and a hundred yards in between. The section between the two garage wings had evidently been used as a technical training school and was equipped with the finest mechanical and technical machinery and equipment available. Besides these fine buildings there was also an indoor riding ring, a blacksmith shop, a clothing and equipment supply building (about fifty yards long), a gymnasium completely equipped with every conceivable piece of German athletic equipment, a music room with all instruments for a complete band, a fire Station and Truck, a thousand inch rifle range, an ordnance testing range, a swimming pool, several air raid shelters and small arms ammunition storage shacks. The whole camp had been well conceived and planned and was especially suitable for a battalion of our type. The motor pool made excellent use of the fine garages and machine shop and Company B set up all its vans under the garage shelter with the solid concrete floor as a perfect foundation for the leveling jacks.

On the thirteenth of April the battalion was saddened by the news that President Roosevelt had passed away suddenly. Everyone refused to believe our popular Commander and Chief could be gone but official confirmation gave truth to the story and everyone soberly recalled the modest greatness of our leader and voiced their regret that he could not have stayed in the fight a little longer and enjoyed the fruits of his efforts for which he had so bravely fought and died and which was now so very near.

On this same date the Survey Platoon of Headquarters and Service Company returned from their Rhine River bridge building job which they had started on D plus 1 of the crossing of the Rhine by the Ninth Army.

The 655th had come to believe that the days were not too far off when the unit would realize the secret desire of all GIs to march into the city of Berlin. The Ninth was now moving faster than the other armies--surely headed for Berlin and at the present rate of advance would even beat the Russians to the city. Is was about this

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time that the "Top Secret" job arrived in the battalion that revealed to men handling the job that the Ninth would stop at the Elbe River to wait for the Russians and the ambition of American GIs to march into Berlin would never be realized. The Ninth at this time was already nearing the Elbe and the war was almost over for them "unofficially".

On the fifteenth Major Kelsey departed with advance party to Branuschweig, Germany, the battalions next proposed move. Colonel Fisher visited the 655th the following day.

The remainder of the Headquarters Company Survey Platoon returned from the Rhine River on the eighteenth of April, bringing with them the distinction of being the first group to cross the Roosevelt-Rhine Bridge; the first fixed railroad bridge completed by US Engineers across the Rhine River. Headquarters and Service Company started the move of the Battalion to Braunschweig, Germany, on the nineteenth of April, followed by Company A, Battalion Headquarters, Battalion Operations and Battalion Supply on the twentieth. Company B and the Medical Detachment departed on the twenty-first: The new quarters, called Siegfried Kaserne, were very similar in both arrangement and plan to those just vacated in Bielefeld, but were considerably more damaged by bombing. A few close hits had practically demolished the garages and badly damaged the shops while the barracks worst damage seemed to be the loss of practically all of the window panes. The barracks on the northwest side of the group were filled with German wounded and were being used as a German Hospital. The companies were dispersed in about the same manner as they were in Bielefeld. Company A set up over the mess hall once more and Company B had the use of the garages for their vans again. As soon as the battalion was settled Colonel Fisher again paid the battalion a visit.

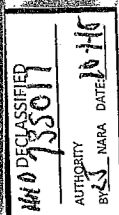
On the twenty-fourth the 655th was called upon by the Ninth Army to provide a unit to search a photogrammetric Research Center in the vicinity of Newhaldensleben or Hellersleben, Germany to locate photogrammetric equipment and to transport same to Engineer Depot Number Twenty in Bielefeld.

The first leave of absence to the Riviera in Gannes, France was

granted to the fortunate Lt O'Reilly. Seventy-two hour passes to Paris were continued.

Work was continuing as usual, even quads on Berlin were made, but everyone sensed that the end was very near. Rumors of Germany's surrender stirred the emotions and hopes of every man almost daily now.

On the morning of the eighth, the local air base P47's started acting strangely. Planes were flying low overhead, Long lines of the Thunderbolts snaked over the sky like they were playing follow the leader, climbing high then noisily power diving, pulling out, then worming off again following their leader. Their actions made the battalion feel that they were aware that something was up and word was hopefully passed around that "This is It!" A battalion formation was scheduled for the afternoon. Barrels of German beer were rolled out onto the big parade grounds and everyone gathered around with canteen cups in hand. Lt Branen called the noisy group to "At Ease" and Colonel Unverferth happily announced the official surrender of Germany, reassured the men that there was "Plenty Beer" and tomorrow was officially Proclaimed VE-Day and a "Holiday". A parade began to form, headed by a large picture of Hitler nailed to a pole. Drums and horns, brought from the Bielefeld music room, rolled and blared and the long line, four abreast, marched around the area, past the German Hospital where the quiet, unbelieving patients viewed the celebration and watched it mill around "der Fueher" who was placed atop a hurriedly gathered pile of timbers which were soaked in gasoline and converted into an exploding bonfire as the match was thrown on. The group danced around the bonfire like a College Pep Rally, singing and cheering and throwing additional wood on the fire making the holocaust bigger and bigger. A Piano had been wheeled onto the field now and 1st Sgt March was beating out "Beer Barrel Polka", "Yankee Doodle Dandy", "When the War is Over", "Sixpence", "I've Been Working on the Railroad" and all the other favorites as Tec 5 Hamilton got out his hot trumpet in accompaniment. It was night now and the bonfire was at its roaring height, shooting sparks straight up into the clear skies to lose themselves in the star. In the distance, red, green



and white ten and twelve ball rockets were coloring up the blackness over the Air Field. The Anti-Aircraft boys had no fireworks but their night stabbing red tracers contributed color with the distress and signal rockets of the other nearby units. There were other noises besides the singing and shouting of the celebrating 655th group, such as the rat-tat-tat of both fifty and thirty caliber machine guns spitting out their gunner's exuberance over the occasion and the barking approval of every small arm in the vicinity. The field was deserted and quiet before the fire had died but the occasional crack of a rifle or short burst of a machine gun could be heard all through the night. It seemed everyone had elected to sleep late for VE-Day-- That is-everyone except the Air Corps. The buzzing little pursuit ships seemed to have risen with the sunrise and both "Thunderbolts" and P51's were brushing off the dawn. The P47's were playing follow the leader again, hanging on each others tail like air borne "Dumbos". The sky had been worn blue by now and apparently the clouds refused to vie with such antics and left the ball room to the "Jitter Bugs". With afternoon however, the planes seemed to grow weary of such vagaries and started their demonstrations of formation flying. Perfect formations, holding the letters "VE"-"AAC"-"USA" and "USSR", passed across the clear sky and even the big four motor bombers came out and showed off their silver bellies to Germans who were still curiously interested because they had not dared to stay and look before. With late afternoon the "show-offs" had grown tired and the clouds had sent pink scouts, about the size of flak bursts to investigate the peace of the heavens. As the shadows turned the last page of six years of European conflict, only the clank of the last game of horseshoes for the day and the soft music of an accordion from the Russian Camp nearby disturbed the peace that had settled on Siegfried Kaserne and Europe.

The War's end did not slacken the job of the Battalion. Map production in connection with the Occupation of Germany continued without let up. There was a period of inactivity however, during the shifts off hours and the need for recreation resulted in the formation of the Siegfried Kaserne Softball League. The league consisted of six teams: The "Bulldozers", Headquarters and Service Company; The

"Neversweats", Company A; The "Diehards", Company B; The "Rum Dums", first three grades of Headquarters and Service Company and Battalion Headquarters personnel; "The Victims", first three grades of Company A, and the "Slavedrivers", the Battalion Officers and first three grades of Company B. Rules for the league were drawn up; prizes planned and a Director of the League was selected; Master Sergeant Albright of the Headquarters and Service Company "Rum Dums". The first game of the league, between the "Bulldozers" and the "Neversweats" was won by the Headquarters and Service Company team by the score of two to one.

No one was very hopeful about going home, even though the war was over in Europe, and on the sixteenth the War Department contributed a little more convincing information these lines by showing the picture "Two Down and One to Go" to the Battalion. The Battalion was scheduled for the Pacific now and the first move on the way back and to the Japanese war started on the seventeenth of May when the unit returned to the Langemark Kaseme in Bielefeld.

Map production was continuing while the Survey Platoon was ordered to do some work in the vicinity of Bremen, Germany. While the survey party was crossing a field, not yet cleared of mines, one of the vehicles hit a concealed mine and severely wounded four men in the party; T. Sgt Gaisford, S. Sgt Risk, Tec 5 Frye and Tec 5 Ephros. S. Sgt Risk was the most seriously wounded and was lost to the unit. Nine days after the war in Europe came to a close the Battalion had received its first casualties. Purple Hearts were awarded to all the wounded personnel.

The functional tempo of the battalion was slowed down a little now and the personnel was permitted to relax with increased passes to Paris, Brussels and Maastricht. A more extensive athletic program was drawn up and the men were now permitted to leave the area and go sight seeing in and around the town of Bielefeld during the daylight hours and up to ten o'clock at night.

Bielefeld was in the English Occupational Zone so the battalion made its move to the American Zone and a nearer redeployment station on the fourth, fifth, and sixth of June. The new station was a very

small German village, Kirchhain, not far from Marburg, Germany. The predominant building of the small town was the 1200 year old church on the top of the hill on which the town was built and from which the town took its name "Kirchhain", meaning "Church in the Grove". The Battalion was broken down to its three Companies for billets. Headquarters and Service Company established itself in residential buildings of the village. Company B was first quartered in an old school building and a few days later moved to a small hotel just across from the railroad station, called the "Bahnhof Hotel".

On the fifteenth of June the battalion was relieved from control of the Ninth US Army and became attached to the Seventh US Army. Production had gradually declined until at times it had almost ceased. Preparations were now started for the impending movement to the redeployment center. Instructions at last arrived, alerting the battalion as of the twenty-second of June to be prepared to move to a later designated Assembly Area Camp for Direct Redeployment to the Pacific Theatre of Operations. Battalion personnel departed for the Assembly Area on the twenty-fifth of June, by "Forty and Eights" once again but a much more comfortable condition was attained by the reduction of the number of personnel to the car to about twenty. Vans and motor vehicles left with drivers and assistant drivers the next morning. The 655th Battalion arrived at Camp Baltimore in the Assembly Area Command, just outside of Sulpes, France, on the twenty-eighth of June. Assignment to the Seventh Army was at once relieved and the unit was re-assigned to the Assembly Area Command, United States Forces European Theatre.

Camp Baltimore was one of the group of camps that had been so highly publicized by the "Stars & Stripes" "as a GI's Paradise". The Battalion was eager to reach this "Paradise" as such pleasures as it advertised are only dreams and illusions to a man in the service. Camp Baltimore proved to be just that — "Dreams and Illusions". The proposed camp had barely passed the breaking of ground stage and was little more than a tent city — a paper project. The tents still had earth floors; the latrines were the outdoor, six hole, packing box over trench type; the showers were two outdoor, sixteen spigot, cold water showers for the whole camp; only one PX was in operat-

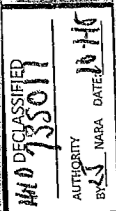
ion with no beer or cokes yet available; the three theatres were one hundred foot tents with no seats, and all water for the Battalion was hauled from a central water point by the battalion water tanker. The swimming pools, golf courses, tennis courts, ball diamonds and all other sport layouts that had been so highly publicized were nonexistent and even the Red Cross Recreational halls and other services under their usual supervision were as yet to be introduced into the camp area. When it rained it was very muddy and when it was sunny and hot it was very dusty. Regardless of the weather by day, it was always cold and damp at night. In World War I this same area had been known as "No Man's Land" and in "World War II" the men were learning why no man wanted it. There was little time for grumbling, with much preparation under way for the impending "Mediterranean Cruise". All equipment was being checked, re-crated and processed for the forthcoming long sea voyage. Readiness date had been set for August the twentieth and the equipment had to be ready for movement to the Port by the twentyfifth of July.

Restriction to the Camp area was relieved by the introduction of a daily Paris pass quota, allowing three officers and sixty enlisted men to enjoy the privilege of passes each day from 0800 to 2300. Transportation was furnished by the battalion motor pool.

At the same time, seventh of July, notification of the Battle Participation credit for the unit for the "Rhineland" campaign was received by the Battalion, authorizing the wearing of one "Battle Star" on the ETO ribbon.

On the tenth of July the Vans and Photomapping Equipment had been processed and with the new shipping number stenciled on them were dispatched by motor convoy for the Marseilles POE. After assisting in final packing and processing of the equipment at the POE the group returned on the eighteenth of July.

On the twenty-fifth, Lt Ojdana with the remainder of the organizations equipment once again departed with his party for the POE, Gignac, France. Colonel McCutchen, the Inspector General and his assistants Lt Col. Paul and Major Walters, from the Inspector General's Department, USFET, visited the Battalion on the twenty-seventh of July.

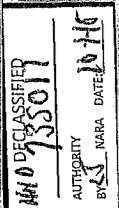


Inspection of Records, Personnel and Equipment was conducted by the group from 0900 to 1430. Men with eighty-five or more points and all men thirty-nine years of age and over had transferred from the organization, new personnel had been added and on the thirtieth of July the battalion started its sixth week of Unit Training with all men now qualified under the new adjustment program.

Orientations on the Japanese, Japan and its territories and Japanese Tactics filled most of the schedule with an educational program on Scrub Typhus Fever, Malaria and other diseases and problems that might be encountered in the Pacific Theatre filled out the schedule. On the fifth of August the unit organizational equipment, less that which was to accompany the troops on board ship, was loaded on trains at Suippes, France for shipment to Staging Area at Arles, France.

On the seventh of August the battalion received notification of a second award for Battle Participation. This time for Participation in the Campaign in "Central Europe". This authorization added a second star to the ETO ribbon, but this date was to become a memorable date for generations for a vastly more important reason than a Battle Participation Star. The basic energy of the universe, the power of the atom, had been solved and all its terrible and bewildering force had been released by a lone bomber over the Japanese city of Hiroshima. This single bomb had completely erased sixty percent of this modern city! The magnitude of the significance of this new weapon so far overshadowed anything else that entrance of the Soviet Union in to the Pacific war on this same date received little notice. The crushing power of this new weapon brought hope to every mind that the Japs would soon collapse but no one was prepared for the swiftness with which it came. On the tenth another bomb was released over the city of Nagasaki, to more thoroughly demonstrate to the stubborn Japs the advisability of quitting before it was too late, and on this date the Japanese news agency, Domei, released the long hoped for news that Japan would accept the terms of the Potsdam Conference with the request that the "Sovereignty" of the Emperor be left intact. Jubilation was subdued in the Assembly Area Command — the Pacific was too close to most of these men.

for premature celebrations, and a major condition as that of "Sovereignty", as attached to the Japanese acceptance, could very easily result in a refusal by the Allies, or delay that would find most of these men on the boat and away to the Pacific. Sweating out the Peace was worse than sweating out the war. The hope of going home had been so remote before the miracle of the atomic bomb that no one had even been so foolish as to dream of the possibility. But now, everyone could dream — and fear. Rumor, delay and uncertainty tied "Granny" knots in nerves that would slip out and then get tied up all over again. The Japs had been told that their God-Like Emperor could be retained, but we'd dictate to him everything that he could do even to riding his Snow White Charger, and now, we must wait to see what the Jap's answer would be to this. The Jap offer had been received on Friday — it was now only Saturday, but a century had passed. Sunday of void waiting — could the Japs be up to some trick? — Why were they stalling? Monday was another lump in the sands of the Hour Glass and there were those who insisted that the war was not over by any means. Even when news arrived that Tokyo had announced to the Japanese people that an important announcement would be made at eight o'clock Tuesday morning everyone was still doubtful and suspicious. The Tokyo announcement came six hours before they had promised and report that they had announced that the Allied surrender terms were accepted. No one celebrated. Tuesday dragged by — no official announcement, until, at seven PM eastern time when our new Commander and Chief, President Truman, officially announced the war was over. That was two AM Wednesday in Camp Baltimore and no one knew it until Wednesday morning after reveille. There was an uncertain feeling of relief-no shouting, no demonstrations and no place to go if one felt like blowing off steam. Everyone was very sober and serious. This was different than the German peace. This was the end of the whole conflagration-it meant every man could now go home---or could he? That tantalizing thought seemed to be the sobering influence. The war was over for those at home only. Our orders still were unchanged, and if they were changed there was the question of occupation and shipping. Men with over a hundred



points who were eligible for discharge and going home since last May were still here--waiting! Everyone was counting his points and criticism of the system was hardly one of praise. The 86th, which was in Camp Livingston with the 655th, had been returned to the states with the 95th Division and both were causing quite a lot of disturbance over being sent on to the Pacific, but they were still going. Most of our Battalion was below the seventy-five point margin which was declared as the critical score for the 86th and 95th and the future was hardly considered as bright. There was still hope however, as it had been announced that no unit designated for the Pacific would now go straight, but would first go to the States for a thirty day furlough and if at that time nothing had been changed, would proceed on to the Pacific. The Battalion's position was an advantageous one, it seemed. Everything was packed and processed, the unit was in the Assembly Area ready to leave and the date of departure was still the same — except, of course, with happy stipulation that the battalion would now go home first.

On the twenty-seventh of August the long sweated out change of orders arrived and at a Battalion formation Colonel Unverferth revealed the welcome news, which, briefly revealed that the unit would proceed at an early date to the POE, probably Marsailles, thence to the States for furloughs. Then all eligible men would go with the unit to the Pacific — the Battalion would arrive in the States within a month from the date of the orders. The news was enthusiastically received but the Colonel advised caution and recommended "Don't advise your wives or families that you are coming home until we reach the POE". This last advice proved to be sagely put, but unfortunately most of the men did not heed it. Almost at the time the announcement was being made the Assembly Area was being bypassed by a unit that proceeded on to Marsailles and probably contributed materially to the delay in orders for the Battalion which found itself enmeshed in the sudden screening order to determine all men in the unit with forty-four VE Day points and less, and make them subject to transfer from the Battalion for service as occupational personnel in the Assembly Area Command and Germany, to be replaced by men from other units with forty-five or

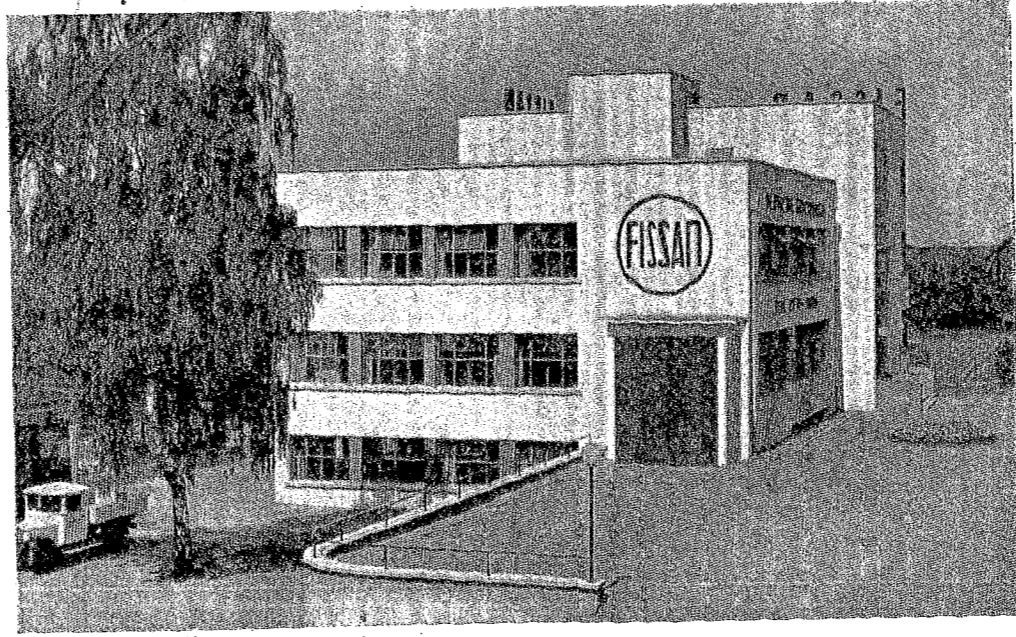
more points. Two hundred fifteen men out of the Battalion's four hundred thirty-five total personnel were caught in this net, with the first group of five men, all from Company B, departing to Camp Headquarters on the seventh of September to assume the duties of movie projectionists on the Post.

So, might one reason, followed the orderly desintegration of the 655th and a happy ending for all, but hardly was this the case. A sudden reversal of orders, brought about by the capitulation of Japan, left the unit stranded at Camp Baltimore awaiting disposition. It came after one hundred and four days of residence at Camp Baltimore, 6 October 45, such of the battalion as remained after high score personnel were removed headed with heavy steps back to Germany for duty with the occupation forces, where at this writing we sit, with good wishes for the men who preceded us home, but anxious for the sight of a troopship, the roll and pitch of a homeward voyage and the feel underfoot of the soil we hope never again to leave.

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BY: S MARA DATE: 10/16/00

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655<sup>th</sup> ENG TOPO BN

RPT OF OPNS

8 MAY to 1 DEC

1945

HISTORICAL PROGRAM FILES  
HISTORICAL DIVISION  
HEADQUARTERS, U.S. FORCES, EUROPEAN THEATER

ENIBN-655-0.3 - Opns Rpt - 655th Engineers Topographic Battalion - 8 May - 1 Dec 1945

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E.O. 12958, Sept. 27, 1983  
date APR 6 1965

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BY *LS* NARA DATE: *10-11-80*

HEADQUARTERS  
655th ENGINEER TOPOGRAPHIC BATTALION  
APO 173 US ARMY

G2 - XO - 29  
31 May 1946

SUBJECT: Report of Operations.

TO : Commanding General, US Forces, European Theater, APO 757.  
Att.: G - 3 Historical Sub Section; Thru Third US Army.

1. Enclosed herewith is "Report of Operations" for this Battalion for the period 8 May 1945 to 30 September 1945.

2. Reports covering the remaining periods will be transmitted as soon as completed.

FOR THE COMMANDING OFFICER:

*K Q Johnson*  
K Q JOHNSON  
1st Lt, CE  
Adjutant

*ENRBN - 655-0.3*

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*K-7 Jan*

*Master*



1610 DECLASSIFIED  
735011  
AUTHORITY  
BY: JS NARA DATE: 10-16-16

HEADQUARTERS  
655th ENGINEER TOPOGRAPHIC BATTALION  
APO 173 US ARMY

G2 - XO - 29  
7 May 1946

SUBJECT: Report of Operations from 8 May 1945 to 30 September 1945.

TO : Commanding General, US Forces, European Theater, APO 757,  
Att.: G-3 Historical Sub-Section; thru Third US Army.

FORWARD. This history is being written by the organization Commander as he is the only remaining member of the unit. A majority of the material is taken from his memory as all records were shipped either to AG Inactive Records or were shipped with unit's equipment.

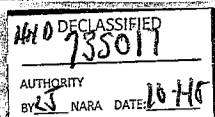
REFERENCES.

1. Organization's Official History.

CONTENTS.

1. Administration and Personnel.
2. Security.
3. Troop's Operational Activities.
4. Supply and Logistics.
5. Communications and Transportation.
6. Law and Order.
7. Medical Affairs.
8. Army Welfare.

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## HEADQUARTERS

655th ENGINEER TOPOGRAPHIC BATTALION  
APO 173 US ARMY

G 2-XO-29  
7 May 1946

SUBJECT: Report of Operations from 8 May 1945 to 30 September 1945.

TO : Commanding General, US Forces, European Theater APO 757  
Att.: G-3 Historical Sub-Section; Thru Third US Army.

1. ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL.

a. Awards and Decorations. No awards were given to members of this organization. Five requests for awards were submitted to 9th US Army before 8 May 1945. Due to changes of jurisdiction the recommendations were submitted to five headquarters without final action being taken till February of 1946 and then they were disapproved.

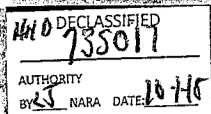
b. Leaves, Furloughs, and Passes. While in the Assembly Area Command from July till September, pass and furlough allocations were so large that at times it was hard to find sufficient men to fill the allocations. Several one day tours of the surrounding historical towns were available during the last month. The twenty hour passes to Paris were the most popular.

c. Morale of Troops. This period was by far the worst in the battalion's history due chiefly to the uncertainty of the situation. First the unit was to be redeployed direct to the Pacific then indirect, then to the States and finally to remain as occupation troops. The excessive stay in the Assembly Area Camp with too little to do and the daily conflicting stories that came out in army sponsored periodicals, were the chief causes for the low morale.

d. Postal Activities. During our stay in the A.A.C. we received the best service since arriving on the Continent. The average Air Mail letter took only five days.

e. Promotions, Demotions, and Reclassifications. The majority of promotions were given during the last month of this period due to the redeployment of most of the first three grades.

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The following are the promotions awarded through the period.

- 2 officers promoted to 1st Lt.
- 1 EM promoted to 1st Sgt.
- 3 EM promoted to Technical Sgt.
- 7 EM promoted to Staff Sgt.
- 2 EM promoted to Sergeant
- 2 EM promoted to Corporal
- 10 EM promoted to T/3
- 23 EM promoted to T/4
- 33 EM promoted to T/5

No reclassification proceedings were instigated.

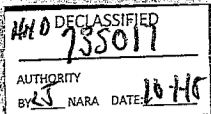
f. Redeployment, Readjustment, and Replacements. Due to the numerous changes in the Battalion's category our redeployment was very mixed up. Redeployment was not started till after the unit arrived in the A.A.C. on 28 June 1945. The first men to be cleared from the organization when it was to be redeployed direct to the Pacific were men with Japanese ancestry, men that fought in the Mediterranean as well as in Europe, etc. The next group out was when the Category was changed to Category IV and all low point men were transferred to Station Complement, Camp Baltimore. A few high point men began to trickle in. Our Category was changed to I and the order affecting our low point personnel was rescinded, and our low point men were returned. We then transferred out all Officers and Enlisted Men that were over the critical score and over age. Replacements were received to bring the organization up to T/O strength in Enlisted Men. A total of 5 Officers and 62 Enlisted Men were reassigned to other organizations during the period and 1 Officer and 55 Enlisted Men joined.

## 2. SECURITY.

a. Fraternization Activities and Effects. On May 8th organization was billeted in a Kaserne at Braunschweig, Germany. The Kaserne was completely fenced in and was patrolled. Men were not allowed out after 1900. The same existed when the organization moved to Bielefeld, Germany, except the restriction was lifted to 2100. In both places men were known to have sneaked out in after curfew and fraternized, but it was not prevalent. On 4 June the Battalion moved to Kirchhain, Germany, where it was necessary to billet men in Hotels and School Buildings, and less control could be exercised over the men. The Fraternization ban was still being enforced, and there was no marked change in the men's attitude and the men conducted themselves very well. From 27 June till the end of the period, the organization was stationed in France.

b. Black Market Activities. The men participated in very little black market activity throughout the entire period. No violators were apprehended.

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c. Censorship and Information Control. Censorship of mail was lifted shortly after the cessation of hostilities. When the organization received movement orders to the A.A.C., mail censorship was again imposed, and the men were given the two censorship lectures. While in the A.A.C., the organization was given all lectures as prescribed for redeployment.

### 3. TROOPS' OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES.

a. Educational Program. Two tours of orientation were given weekly until the unit moved to the A.A.C. where the prescribed eight week training course was undertaken. After the eight week course was finished a supplemental training course was started and it continued till the unit left the area.

b. Employment of Troops. The organization performed its normal operational functions till alerted for movement to the A.A.C.. The Reproduction company worked on an eight hour two shift basis printing maps and organizational histories. The Photomapping company worked on the revision of the 4507 Series covering Bavaria. The H&S company performed the usual services.

In the Assembly Area Command the troops were trained equipped and readied to perform this mission in the Pacific Theater. All operation records for the period 8 May 1945 to 15 June 1945, were shipped with the organizational equipment, therefore there are no statistics on hand for the work performed for this period.

c. Organization. The Battalion was at T/O strength thru the majority of the period. The high positions in the Battalion were filled at all times, and the organization was capable of performing its mission.

d. Redeployment Effects. Due to strength in depth of qualified personnel for all high positions and low percentage of personnel redeployed, redeployment was not filled throughout this period.

#### e. Movements and Mission Assignments.

8 May 1945, this organization was assigned to the Ninth United States Army and located in Braunschweig, Germany.

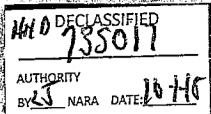
17 May 1945, the unit moved to Bielefeld, Germany, which is situated in the English Zone.

4 June 1945, the unit moved out of the English Zone of Occupation into the American Zone to Kirchhain, Germany, near Marburg.

15 June 1945, the battalion was relieved from control of the Ninth United States Army and became attached to the Seventh United States Army.

28 June 1945, the unit arrived at Camp Baltimore near Suippes, France, and upon arrival was relieved from Seventh United States Army control and assigned to Assembly Area Command, United States Forces, European Theater.

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10 July 1945, the organization equipment started moving to Marseilles and Cignac, France, Ports of Embarkations, movement and equipment were completed about 10 August 1945.

Due to capitulation of Japan the personnel of the battalion were still in Camp Baltimore on the 30 September 1945.

#### 4. SUPPLY AND LOGISTICS.

a. Ammunition Stock and Disposal. All stocks of ammunition were turned in upon arrival at the A.A.C. with the exception of guard-ammunition. All men fired a familiarization course with the carbine with new sight. The ammunition was drawn from the training allowance of Camp Baltimore. No ammunition was expended for tactical reasons.

b. Billeting and Winterization. From 8 May 1945 to 3 June 1945, the organization was billeted in two German Kasernes, one was in excellent condition and the other was fair. From 4 June 1945 to 26 June 1945, the men were billeted in a hotel, school, and houses, and all were quite adequate. On arrival at the A.A.C., the men and officers were quartered in tents, small wall and tents, squad. Mess Halls and Bn C.P. were in frame building. The tents were winterized after the first month. Quarters were not adequate as the weather was too cold and damp for comfort.

c. Disposal of Equipment. Awaiting redeployment, the equipment, except M.E.E., was processed and packed for overseas shipment. On 10 July 1945, the first equipment left for the port. Majority of the equipment was shipped and never recovered.

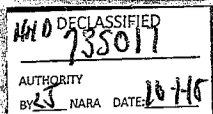
d. Food and Clothing. Food throughout the period was ample and adequate. The organization had considerable trouble securing combat serviceable clothing and equipment, while in the A.A.C. excessive amount of time was taken in processing and filling the requisitions. When the clothing was received, most was no better than the clothing turned in.

e. Gasoline, Oil, and Lubricants. All records up to 28 June 1945 for gas and oil consumed were shipped with the organizational equipment. After 28 June 1945, no record of consumption was kept, as the Battalion was only authorized to keep 12 vehicles and the gasoline was rationed out daily by the gas dump of the camp.

f. Post Exchange Activities. This organization operated its own P.X. by drawing from the Army Warehouse till 25 June 1945, and for the remainder of the period the men drew their P.X. supplies individually from the camp P.X.'s.

g. Unit Vehicle Turn-in. All unit general service vehicles were turned for processing at Camp Baltimore, with the exception of 12 housekeeping vehicles. The motors and chassis of all special purpose vehicles were processed by ordnance and the engineer equipment was processed by this organization. The special purpose vehicles were driven to the port on 10 July 1945 for shipment.

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h. Use of German Military and Civilian Labor. No German labor was used by this organization prior to 28 June 1945. German Prisoners of War were furnished by the Camp for KP duty and for making improvements in each unit area while in the Assembly Area.

#### 5. COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORTATION.

No communication or transportation difficulties were encountered. The moves from Braunschweig to Bielefeld and Bielefeld to Kirchhain were by motor convoy. On the move from Kirchhain, Germany, to Camp Baltimore, France, the personnel were sent by rail and the equipment went by motor convoy.

#### 6. LAW AND ORDER.

a. Black Market Activity: No member of this organization was caught dealing in the black market. It was rumored that several men were operating in Paris but an investigation failed to substantiate the accusations.

b. Court Martial Cases: Seventeen members of this organization were tried by Courts Martials during this period, one officer by General Court, five enlisted men by Special Court, eleven enlisted men by Summary Court. Six of the above courts were on the spot trials for uniform violations in Paris. No one violation was prevalent in the majority of the cases.

#### 7. MEDICAL AFFAIRS.

a. Dental Activity. Prior to the unit movement to the Assembly Area, no dental treatment other than emergency could be secured. A dentist was borrowed in June 1945 to run a dental survey of all personnel. In the Assembly Area all men were examined and treated by the Dental Clinic in the camp.

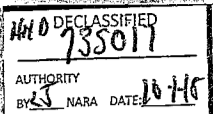
b. Preventative Medicine. The general health of personnel in this organization was excellent during this period. A total of 81 men were hospitalized resulting in 1314 man days lost. The Venereal Disease rate from 8 May 1945 to 28 June 1945 was 71 cases per 1000 per annum, and the past dispensaries rendered the reports on the remaining days of the period.

c. Casualties. On 17 May 1945, one of the survey parties vehicles struck a land mine resulting in the hospitalization of four men, one of whom was lost to the organization. The men were taken direct to an Evacuation Hospital.

#### 8. ARMY WELFARE.

a. Army Food Situation. The food supplied through this period was excellent with regard to quality and quantity. The food was prepared properly and no appreciable waste was noted.

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b. Athletic Facilities. The athletics during this period consisted mainly of soft ball, base ball, volley ball, horseshoes, and some swimming. The inter battalion soft ball league was started on 14 May 1945 and lasted till end of June. The league consisted of eight teams. The base ball team was organized about 1 July 1945 and played all commers in and around Camp Baltimore. The team was very successful only lost by one run in the finals of the Camp Baltimore championship on 18 September 1945. Volley ball was played continuously throughout the period. A swimming pool was only available during the battalion's stay in Kirchhain, Germany. Horse-shoe pitching was very popular during the stay in the A.A.C.. One of the enlisted men won the Camp Baltimore singles title.

c. Awards and Decorations.

(1) The following named men were given the Purple Heart Medal for wounds received on 17 May 1945:

T/Sgt Gaisford entered service from state of New York  
 S/Sgt Risk entered service from state of Florida  
 Tec 5 Ephros entered service from state of New York  
 Tec 5 Frye entered service from state of Alabama.

(2) 24 enlisted men awarded the Motor Vehicle Driver Award (Driver - W).

(3) 132 enlisted men awarded the Good Conduct Medal.

(4) On the 7 July 1945, the battalion was notified of the Battle Participation credit for the "Rhineland" campaign.

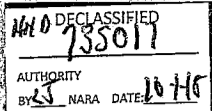
(5) On the 7 August 1945, the battalion was notified of the Battle Participation credit for the "Central Europe Campaign".

d. Billet Accommodations. The billets for all personnel have always been adequate and livable. The best accommodations available were always used as billets.

e. Enlisted Men's and Officers' Clubs. Two enlisted men's and one officers' bars were established during the battalion's stay in Kirchhain, Germany. These bars were run on a nonprofit basis and sold only beer and Cokes. While in the A.A.C., the Wet P.X.'s were operated by the camp exchange. Organized clubs at other places were not feasible.

f. Furloughs and Passes. Furlough and pass quotas were adequate in fact while at Camp Baltimore it was difficult to find men to fill all passes allocated. A pass quota, to Paris for 60 enlisted men and three officers, was allocated daily when the organization was not on the alert.

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g. Self Study Courses. From 1 July 1945 to the end of the period approximately one third of the members of this organization took USAFI Courses. A four hours study period was held four days a week.

h. Inspections and Investigations. On 27 July 1945, this organization was inspected by a team from the Inspector General's Office in preparation for redeployment to the Pacific. The team consisted of Col. McCutchen, Lt. Col. Paul, and Major Walters.

i. Motion Picture Activities. Motion pictures were shown daily while the unit was stationed in Braunschweig and Bielefeld, Germany. Daily movies were shown at Camp Baltimore from about 15 July 1945 to the end of the period.

j. Soldier Publications. Stars and Stripes, Army Talks, and other I & E and Special Service Publications were received in sufficient quantity for adequate distribution. It is felt that Stars and Stripes did more harm than good thru its erroneous and conflicting stories on redeployment.

k. Religious Activities. The men have always been able to go to the church of their choosing. When Army Chaplains were not able to hold services exclusively for the battalion, trucks were furnished to take men to the nearest services.

l. U.S.O., American Red Cross, YMCA, and Soldier Shows. This battalion had the benefit of none of these until after 28 June 1945. In the A.A.C. the live USO shows were excellent and the Red Cross was of some help.

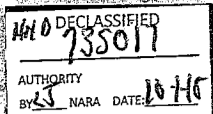
General. Paragraphs omitted from the topical outline were not applicable during this period.

FOR THE COMMANDING OFFICER:

*Wayne W. Walters*  
WAYNE W. WALTERS  
Capt, CE  
Historian Officer

**CONFIDENTIAL**





HEADQUARTERS  
 655th ENGINEER TOPOGRAPHIC BATTALION  
 APO ~~XX~~ 758 US ARMY

1 December 1945

SUBJECT: Report of Mapping Activities.

TO : Intelligence Division OCE TSFET (Main) APO 757  
 (Attention: Major DUCLOS).

Herewith is the report of mapping activities for the period ending 30 November 1945.

1. New Mapping: None.
2. Revision:
  - a. Berlin Town Plan: (First Priority)  
 Revision of sheets 3 and 4 from 1:10,00 Berlin map coverage. Extension of existing sheet lines to include American coverage. Extension of existing sheet lines to include American Zone inserts. Addition of Military Control Boundaries.
    - (1) Additions to culture being made on ozalid work sheets pending receipt of film positives requested from Base Reproduction plant.
    - (2) Boundary overlays being prepared for each sheet.
  - b. GSGS 4492: (2nd Priority)
    - (1) Twenty-six sheets, partially revised were assigned to this organization for completion. Of the twenty-six sheets listed as complete, the following require corrections for the road overlay as a result of the information shown in the Engr Road Survey.  
 49E, 49W, 55E, 56W, 63E, 65W, 71E, 71W, 72E, 72W.
    - (2) The following sheets require additional compilation to cover gap areas in the original map or photographic coverage.  
 48E, 48W, 50E, 50W, 55W, 56E, 57E, 57W, 58 , 63W, 64E, 64W, 65E, 66 , 73E, 73W.
    - (3) The Engr Road Survey coverage is incomplete and additional coverage will be required.

Annex "A"

4410 DECLASSIFIED  
 735017  
 AUTHORITY  
 BY LS NARA DATE: 10-11-80

c. GSGS 4416 Gazetteer Listings

- (1) The project of editing galley proofs of the Gazetteer of place names for the 4416 1:100,000 series was assigned to this organization 10 November 1945.
- (2) Approximately thirty-five percent errors have been found in the listings checked to date. Errors were found in the spelling of names, sheet number, and coordinates.
- (3) Approximately one in one thousand names cannot be found on the 1:100,000 sheets after an exhaustive check of all possible errors.
- (4) The present rate of progress is five hundred listing per day. Progress on the project to date is as follows.

LETTER GROUP	NO. PAGES	% COMPLETE
B	18	48%

(5) Progress for the entire project is 8.6% complete.

3. Reproduction:

Sixty-six sheets of the GSGS 4507 series were assigned to this organization for reproduction of theatre stock levels 21 November 1945 priority routine.

- a. Only two sheets were available in the kodaline files of the 3060 Engr Tope Co. A request for the kodalines on the remaining sheets was forwarded to Int. Div. OCE 28 November 1945.
- b. To date no sheets have been reproduced for delivery to the Mulheim Map Depot.
- c. Tabulation of Copy Printed:

(1)	Standard Maps	0
(2)	Special Maps	200
(3)	Miscellaneous	41,850
	Total:	<u>42,050</u>

4. Aerial Photography:

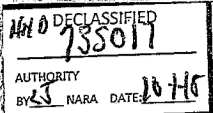
No photography requested during this period. A formal request is being prepared for photo coverage needed on the GSGS 4492 project and will be submitted in the near future.

5. Control: No projects.
6. Supplies: No comments.
7. Map Distribution: No comments.

FOR THE COMMANDING OFFICER:

NORMAN RUBIN  
 WOJG AUS  
 Asst S-3

Annex "A"



HEADQUARTERS  
 655th ENGINEER TOPOGRAPHIC BATTALION  
 APO ~~758~~ 758 US ARMY

2 January 1946

SUBJECT: Report of Mapping Activities.

TO : Intelligence Division O.C.E. (Main) TSPET APO 757  
 Attention: Major Duclos.

Submitted herewith is the report of mapping activities for the period ending 31 December 1945.

1. New Mapping - None.

2. Revision

a. Berlin Town Plan: (First Priority)

Revision of sheets 3 & 4 is complete to stick up stage. Type has been set for all stick up except 6 point and below. Difficulties are being encountered in obtaining type small enough to be set up and proofed on Duraseal.

b. GSGS 4492: (2nd Priority)

(1) All revision is complete as far as Photo Coverage and Engineer Road Survey Coverage permit. Sheets 63E and 65W are the only sheets with 100% Photo Coverage and Road Survey Coverage. These sheets are completely revised and drafted. Stick up on marginal data is not completed.

(2) The twenty-four remaining sheets cannot be worked on further until the necessary photo of request for this data have been submitted through channels.

c. Model Project

(1) This project was assigned to this unit on 5 December 1945 with a rush priority. An estimated completion date was given by this office as fifty days after receipt of supplies and equipment necessary to begin the project.

(2) Difficulties have been encountered in requisitioning supplies and equipment for the job. Therefore work on the panels has been confined to editing.

Annex "B"

1610 DECLASSIFIED  
 735017  
 AUTHORITY  
 BY NARA DATE 10/16/16

- 2 -

3. Reproduction.

a. Twenty-two GSGS 4507 kodalines were received by this office on 10 December 1945. These sheets are being printed accordingly to instructions.

(1) At the present time only one sheet of this series (sheet 15) is completed.

(2) This sheet is now ready for shipment to the Muhlheim Map Depot.

b. Number of Impressions.

(1) Standard Maps	-	50,000
(2) Special Maps	-	40,800
(3) Miscellaneous	-	44,590
Total		134,790

c. During the past month, the reproduction company has received additional equipment and supplies which will enable us to set up a reproduction unit of a more permanent nature.

(1) At the present time 60% of the equipment received has been installed.

(2) Inventory of items received is still being done. A complete inventory will be submitted to your office as soon as possible.

(3) The larger items received include two (2) Harris presses, three (3) Webendorfer presses, one (1) Camera Set No. 5 with van, two Crabtree presses, two whirlers.

4. Aerial Photography:

a. A formal request was made for photo coverage needed on the GSGS 4492 project with a coverage diagram attached showing the gaps to be filled.

5. Control: No projects.

6. Map Distribution: No comments.

Allan V. Evans  
 1st Lt. CE  
 Operations Officer

Annex "B"

DECLASSIFIED  
735011  
AUTHORITY  
BY NARA DATE 10-10-80

**RESTRICTED**

655 ENG TOP BN  
RPT OF OPNS  
1 JAN TO 30 NOV  
1946

ENBN-655-0.3 - Opnd Rpt - 655th Engineer Topographic Battalion - 1 Jan - 30 Nov - 1946

HISTORICAL PROGRAM FILES  
HISTORICAL DIVISION  
HEADQUARTERS U.S. CORPS, EUROPEAN THEATER

Restricted Classification  
Removed Per  
Executive Order 10501

**RESTRICTED**

DECLASSIFIED  
735017  
AUTHORITY  
BY: SS NARA DATE: 10-7-16

HEADQUARTERS  
655th ENGINEER TOPOGRAPHIC BATTALION  
APO 175 US ARMY

**RESTRICTED**

SH - XO - 29  
18 July 1946

*G-3 Hist*

**SUBJECT:** Report of Operations from 1 January 1946 to 31 March 1946.

**TO:** Commanding General, US Forces, European Theater, APO 757. Attention: G-3 Historical Sub-Section; through Third US Army.

*From [unclear] 16*

FOREWORD

This period covers the darkest hours of the battalion due to redeployment of majority of the trained men. It also covers the assignment of our first replacements from the States.

REFERENCES

1. Organization's Official History.
2. Technical Operation Report.
3. Battalion Special Orders.
4. Battalion Files.

Recd G-3 Section  
 Date & Time: 20.09.30  
 Invt. No. K 469

CONTENTS

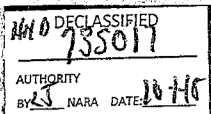
1. Administration and Personnel.
2. Security.
3. Troop Occupational Activities.
4. Supply and Logistics.
5. Communication and Transportation.
6. Law and Order.
7. Medical Affairs.
8. Army Welfare.

RECEIVED  
 10 JUL 1946  
 0766

*ENBN-655-0.3*

**RESTRICTED**

*Smith*



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SH - XO - 29

## I. ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL

a. Awards and Decorations. Due to the great turnover of personnel there were no awards or decorations given to the men of this battalion.

b. Leaves, Furloughs and Passes.

1. By the middle of this period leaves and furloughs quotas were drastically cut to go along with the conservation of manpower program.

2. Passes were freely given out for off duty time. Tours to the surrounding points of interest were organized by the Special Service NCO.

c. Morale of Troops. The morale of the troops seemed to be very high due to the constant advancing of the redeployment schedule beyond the previously published program. The coming of Spring also brought out the spirit of the men.

c. Postal Activities. It was felt that after the Christmas rush the mail service would settle down to regular service but this was not always so. Mail deliveries were very spasmodic due to the bad flying weather over the continent and ocean. Sometimes no mail was received for over ten days, but it could not be helped.

e. Promotions, Demotions and Reclassifications.

1. Promotions during this period were necessary to fill some of the vacancies created by the men going home. The following are the promotions made:

- 1 EM promoted to M/Sgt.
- 1 EM promoted to 1st Sgt.
- 11 EM promoted to T/Sgt.
- 8 EM promoted to S/Sgt.
- 3 EM promoted to Sgt.
- 1 EM promoted to Corp.
- 6 EM promoted to T/3
- 25 EM promoted to T/4
- 47 EM promoted to T/5

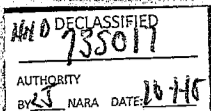
No officers were promoted.

- 2. Two men were reduced to the grade of Private.
- 3. No reclassification proceedings were instigated.

f. Redeployment and Replacements.

1. Redeployment went unabated throughout the entire period. Some men that had been transferred in from other organizations during the period were redeployed in the same month due to the stepped up program. There were 9 officers and 308 enlisted men transferred out during this period for redeployment or emergency reasons.

2. There were 12 officers and 180 enlisted men transferred into the organization. A majority of the enlisted replacements received could not be absorbed due chiefly to their low mentality and utter lack of any training suitable for this highly specialized outfit.



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3. One man re-enlisted in regular Army and was sent to the Zone of Interior because of excessive months of overseas service.

g. Safety Program. A theater wide safety program was conducted during the month of March. Lectures were given the drivers, signs were posted and each driver was given a daily safety slogan to go with his trip ticket. The campaign was very successful as it reduced accidents and speeding.

## II. SECURITY

a. Black Market Activities. Black Market activities were greatly reduced due to Currency Control. One man, on leave in Paris, was caught with two currency control books. He was returned with the evidence. The man was tried and convicted. The extra money could have been acquired only on the black market. No other activities were noted.

b. Civilian Police. The men were not giving the Civilian Police the necessary assistance and at times even hindered them while they were doing their duty. These cases usually had to do with the girl friends of the soldiers. It was finally necessary to give the men a lecture on "Assistance to the Civilian Police".

c. Security Raids. Several minor raids were made on the homes of several civilian employees after cases of pilfering were noted. Each raid netted a small amount of GI equipment but nothing on a large scale. All culprits were fired and turned over to the civilian police.

## III. TROOPS OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES.

### a. Education Program.

1. A majority of the USAFI courses had been dropped as the personnel who were taking them had been redeployed. The lack of interest was due to the rapid redeployment and the influx of enlistees who showed little interest in anything.

2. Two officers attended the two week Officers Refresher course conducted by Seventh US Army.

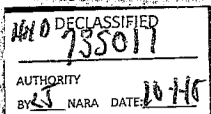
3. Five men were sent to Cite Universitaire Paris France for eight week courses.

4. One enlisted man was placed on TDY with 6877 Staff Detachment to go to school in London.

### b. Employment of Troops.

1. By 1 January 1946, the plant was established and in full operation. The reproduction company was operating all five presses and all allied equipment. They continued to make improvements on their plant. The photomapping company started on the projects on a priority system as established by OCE, USFET. By the end of the period, photomapping had all but shut down, due to the redeployment of all the skilled men.





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The Mapping projects were all shelved. Due to a lack of survey projects, the survey platoon was allowed to dwindle to nothing for the men were more critically needed elsewhere.

2. Copies of the Operation Reports on the Mapping Activities of this organization, as submitted to OCE, TSFET are attached as Annexes "A", "B" and "C".

3. On 11 March 1946, this battalion activated Detachment "A" to take over the setting up and eventual operation of the Theater Map Reproduction Plant in Frankfurt. The Detachment was to consist of one officer and fifteen enlisted men whose mission was to supervise and instruct German civilian labor in construction and operation of the plant.

c. Organization and Training.

1. The organization of the battalion remained the same but the technical sections of the battalion went very far below strength. Most replacements received were not skilled so were placed in overhead to keep the outfit going.

2. On the job training was continuous in the reproduction company. In the middle of the period, the photomapping company had to cease all technical operations and start from scratch to teach the few replacements how to draft and photo-interpret. The few remaining trained men were used as instructors.

d. Redeployment Effect. Redeployment did all but make this organization inoperational. Most of the technically qualified men were redeployed and the replacements were without skill and had very little aptitude for learning.

e. Movements and Missions Assigned.

1. The only change in assignment occurred on 20 March 1946. This organization was assigned to Headquarters Seventh US Army and attached to OCE, TSFET, for operational control.

2. There were no movements of any consequence during this period.

## IV. SUPPLY AND LOGISTICS

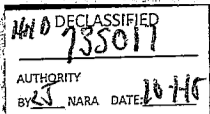
a. Ammunition Stocks. Due to a theater directive that all Category I units would have on hand the basic load of ammunition, the basic load was requisitioned and all that was available was drawn.

b. Billeting and Winterization.

1. The billeting was substantially the same as at the end of the last period except all had more space due to the decrease in personnel.

2. The only winterization necessary was to repair the furnaces in several of the billets. One furnace had to be replaced.

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c. Food and Clothing. The food throughout the period was ample in quantity and quality but with little variety. Contrary to what was published, ten in one rations were too frequently issued. The only noted shortage in clothing was in rating chevrons.

d. Gasoline, Oil and Lubricants, Fuel and Coal.

1. Even though gasoline was rationed there was always sufficient available to operate the vehicles and kitchen units. The petroleum consumed throughout the period was 37,759 gallons of gasoline and 5,184 quarts of oil with the resulting average mileage per gallon for all vehicles, of 7.284.

2. As coal was rationed and sufficient was not allocated for operating the plant, community showers and space heating, approximately one hundred cords of wood were hauled in from the woods and used. Three hundred and eleven tons of coke and briquets were consumed.

e. Post Exchange Activities. Two post exchange stores were established for over the counter sale, one in the Plant area for Battalion headquarters, Company "A" and Company "B" the other was in the hotel lobby in Auerbach for the personnel of Headquarters and Service Company.

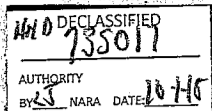
f. Procurement Activities. The Battalion had a Purchasing and Contracting Officer appointed on the 24 October 1945 but he was not utilized as such till during this period. He purchased German reproduction materials, parts for our equipment and materials necessary to operate the base plant.

g. Special Engineer Equipment. An additional complete T/O & E of mobile equipment was drawn over and above the base plant equipment so that this unit could take to the field if necessary and leave the base plant intact. The vehicles from which we took the plant equipment were retained on hand.

h. Table of Organization and Equipment. A special list of equipment, signed by the Intelligence Officer, OCE, TSFET was used to draw the base plant equipment.

i. Use of German Civilian Labor. German civilians were used to do all menial tasks such as KP, custodians, etc. The maintenance men who operated the plant for the German owners were retained. Several German reproduction technicians were hired to take the place of the skilled men who were being redeployed.

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## V. COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORTATION.

a. Critical Shortage of Vital Materials. The shortage of vehicular spare parts was severely felt. The Category I units were to report all class "B" vehicles for turn in and have them replaced by class "A" vehicles. The reports were rendered but with no action taken by higher headquarters.

b. Operation and Repair of Telephones. The Signal Corps switch board that we drew was found to be in sad state of maintenance and much in need of repair. No people skilled in the repair of the board were available, so it was a source of constant trouble.

## VI. LAW AND ORDER

a. Black Market Activity. One member of the organization was apprehended while on leave with two currency control books. It was felt that the extra money was acquired through black market activities while he was stationed in Paris. The man was convicted for violating theater directions.

b. Court Martial Cases. Only three men were convicted by Court Martial during this period. Two men were tried and convicted by Summary Courts and one by a special court. Each man was tried for different offenses.

c. Traffic Control. Due to several serious accidents in a short period of time in this area, the major unit commanders met to formulate a plan of action. It was decided to reduce the speed limit in the Zwingenberg Bensheim area to twenty miles per hour, establish an area summary court to punish all violaters and to acquire an MP detachment if possible to patrol the area.

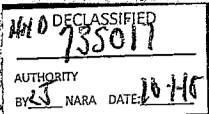
## VII. MEDICAL AFFAIRS.

### a. Dental Activities.

1. Through the cooperation of the Seventh Army Dental Officer, a Dental Officer with a mobile dental office was furnished the battalion on 7 March 1946. He was to remain with the battalion until all of the dental work was completed. The

2. The Dental Laboratory at Darmstadt was a unit to be commended. Even though they were extremely busy, they treated all of our men who had dental trouble as well as making dentures for men who had been unable to get them before. Their cooperation and work was of the highest order.

# RESTRICTED



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## b. Preventative Medicine.

1. The general health of the battalion was excellent. Throughout the period 29 men were hospitalized with the resulting loss of 371 man days.
2. The battalion dispensary operated without a surgeon until 18 March 1946, so all men requiring consultation or hospitalization were sent to Darmstadt to the Hospital.
3. Sanitation throughout the period was excellent.
4. The venereal disease rate for January and February is not known as it was submitted by the Hospital. The rate for the month of March was zero.
5. The period was marked for its lack of communicable diseases. A great drop in Respiratory Diseases was noted due to the influenza immunization.

c. Casualties. The battalion suffered its first casualty when T/5 Leo Zipper was killed on 28 January 1946. His death resulted from a vehicle accident. The vehicle which he was driving over turned on icy pavement just west of Stuttgart.

d. Redeployment Effect. The five men of the Medical Detachment were redeployed during this period. Two replacements were received from the 130 Station Hospital.

## VIII. ARMY WELFARE.

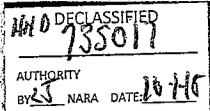
a. Athletics and Athletic Facilities. The only sports participated in during this period were basketball and soft ball. The basketball league played the second half series until March. The play off, between the 306 Ord. Co. and Co. "A", 655th Eng. Bn. was held during the first week of March and the 306th Ord. Co. emerged the league champions by a score of 31 to 27 for the third game. During the remainder of the month all companies were trying out men and practicing for the soft ball season.

## b. Enlisted Men and Officers Clubs.

1. Both enlisted men clubs were in full operation. Both were re-decorated by German Commercial artists and were really beautiful. Spirits allocations were received from the Beverage Control Officer, Seventh Army, to insure a sufficient supply of drinks for all. The clubs were administered and operated under USFET Circular Number 2.

2. During January, the officers from the units in the Bensheim Zwingenberg area got together and decided to start an area Officers Club. At the third meeting the commanding officers of the units who were to form the Council drew up the Constitution and By Laws. The club opened at a former German night club on N-3 one half mile north of Bickenbach, the first week in February and has been a great success.

# RESTRICTED



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c. Furloughs and Passes. Passes and furloughs were cut drastically due to the shortage of personnel but all furlough allocations were filled.

d. GI Universities. Five enlisted men submitted applications to Cite University in Paris and were accepted. They started School on 16 January 1946. One enlisted man left on 1 February 1946 to attend the Warton School in London.

e. Inspections and Investigations.

1. The battalion was inspected twice by the next higher Operational Commander, on 22 January 1946 by Lt. Col. R.G. Waitt and on 13 March 1946 by Lt. Col. R.H. Johannsen. They both seemed pleased and no reports on the inspection were received.

2. On 18 February 1946, Col. H.V. Conan of the Chief of Engineers Office USFET, conducted an investigation in the battalion. The reason of the investigation was an anonymous letter to the Inspector General, regarding alleged misconduct of some of the officers of the battalion. All of the officers present were cleared of all complaints.

f. Morale of Troops. The morale of the troops was high due to the rapid rate of redeployment and adequate recreational facilities.

g. Motion Picture Activities. Motion pictures were shown six nights a week with a different picture every other night. The quality of the pictures was not very good due to frequent repeat shows. They were well attended.

h. Religious Activities.

1. Protestant services were held by an Army Chaplain in Bensheim for all units in this area.

2. Catholic services were held in Bensheim at 9:45 and in the battalion area in Zwingenberg, at 11:15 each Sunday, by an Army Chaplain.

3. Jewish services were held in the Kron Hotel in Auerbach by an enlisted man of this organization.

i. USO, American Red Cross, YMCA and Soldier Show Entertainment Activities.

1. No USO, YMCA and Soldier Shows entertainment activities were available to the men of the command for the unit was considered too small to warrant scheduling such shows.

2. The American Red Cross operated "Wander Inn" which was an excellent place for the men to spend their off duty hours. The Club was closed on 30 March 1946.

FOR THE COMMANDING OFFICER:

# RESTRICTED

*Wayne W. Walters*  
 WAYNE W. WALTERS  
 Capt. CE  
 Battalion Historian.

DECLASSIFIED  
735017  
AUTHORITY  
BY: NARA DATE: 10-11-05

HEADQUARTERS

655th ENGINEER TOPOGRAPHIC BATTALION  
APO 175 US ARMY

SH - XO - 29  
25 August 1946

G-3  
Hist

0001968

SUBJECT: Report of operations from 1 April 1946 to 30 June 1946.

TO: Commanding General, US Forces, European Theater, APO 757, Attention: G-3 Historical SubSection; through Third US Army.

FOREWORD

This period covers the arrival of the cadre of experienced non-commissioned officers who were to be the nucleus around which we were to start to rebuild the organization. It also covers the start of the period when the battalion had to operate with only five officers present for duty.

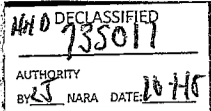
REFERENCES

1. Organization's Official History.
2. Technical Operation Report.
3. Battalion Special Orders.

CONTENTS

1. Administration and Personnel.
2. Security.
3. Troop Occupational Activities.
4. Supply and Logistics.
5. Communication and Transportation.
6. Law and Order.
7. Medical Affairs.
8. Army Welfare.

Recd G-3 Section  
Date & Time 2 Oct 0930  
Journal No. K 86



## I. ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL.

a. Accounting of Personnel. On 27 April, 1946 there was a theater wide nose count and classification of men. This was necessary due to administration deficiencies. At 12:00 on that day the battalion rolls were checked and the required reports were rendered.

b. Awards and Decorations. Nine men were awarded the Good Conduct Medal. No other award or decorations were received.

c. Currency Control. The new currency control books were issued to all men and officers on 20 June 1946. Initial entries were adjusted to the amount of money in the man's possession or the amount of balance in his book, whichever was least.

d. Leaves, Furloughs and Passes.

1. Due to redeployment and conservation of troop strength, the leave allocations were very low. The following are the number of allocations received and furloughs taken, April 17, May 21 and June, 9.

2. Off duty hour passes were freely given. Two 2-1/2 ton trucks were dispatched each Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons to take the men to the surrounding places of interest.

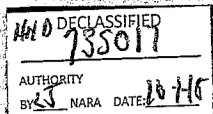
e. Morale of Troops. The morale of the troops was very good. This was chiefly due to the influx of Regular Army men who wanted to be here and the redeployment of all fathers. Some men did not care for the increasing control on discipline, bed check and the like but they were usually the eight balls.

f. Postal Activities. A great improvement was seen in mail and parcel deliveries during this period. This was chiefly due to better weather conditions over the Atlantic. By the end of the period we were receiving five day service on Air Mail.

g. Promotions, Demotions and Reclassifications.

1. The number of promotions were decreased due to the higher requirement established that each man must meet before he is eligible. Greater stress was placed on leadership. The following promotions were made:

- 1 EM promoted to Master Sgt.
- No EM promoted to 1st Sgt.
- 3 EM promoted to Tech Sgt.
- 10 EM promoted to Staff Sgt.
- 3 EM promoted to Sgt.
- 5 EM promoted to Cpl.
- 3 EM promoted to T/3
- 20 EM promoted to T/4
- 42 EM promoted to T/5
- 54 EM promoted to PFC.



- No officers were promoted.
- 2. One man was reduced to the grade of private.
- 3. No reclassification proceedings were instigated.

#### h. Redeployment and Replacements.

1. Redeployment was slowed down greatly for enlisted men due to the fact that there were not many more left. On 11 June 1946, all fathers, who had not been previously redeployed, were sent to the port. There were 11 officers and 127 enlisted men transferred out during this period.

2. There were 20 officers and 164 enlisted men transferred into the organization as replacements. Of the enlisted men, 33 came from the de-activated 667 Engineer Topo Co. Of the replacements received, only the high ranking NCO's were in any way qualified or suitable for assignment to this type of an organization. A majority of the re-enlistees should never have been enlisted because they did not meet the minimum requirements of mentality and stability.

3. One Master Sergeant re-enlisted in the Regular Army for three years.

i. Safety Program. The safety program started in March was continued throughout this period. And for the second period in a row, there were no serious accidents in the battalion. Drivers Maintenance Manuals were issued to all drivers on 28 June 1946.

## II. SECURITY.

### a. Black Market Activity.

1. From checks on currency control books it was evident that a majority of the enlisted men were dealing in the black market on a minor scale. No big time operators were discovered.

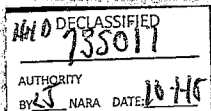
2. Two men, transferred in from the 667 Engineer Topo Bn. were awaiting trial by General Courts Martial for dealing in the black market in US and Allied currency.

b. Civilian Police. German Civilian Police were used to guard the homes of dependents in our Satellite community.

c. Counter Subversive System. A Counter Subversive System was set up 4 May 1946 as directed by higher headquarters. It consisted of several operatives in each company and an NCO to report to the S-2 any information picked up by contact with German Nationals or DP's that might be detrimental to our Occupation of Germany.

d. Security Raids. No security raids were performed by members of this command during this period.





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### III. TROOP OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES.

#### a. Assigned Missions.

1. Permission to operate a satellite community was requested 1 April 1946 for the dependents of this and the surrounding organizations. Approval was received on or about 1 June 1946. The first dependents arrived in the theater on 29 April, 1946. No additional personnel were received for the operation of this community.

2. On 3 June 1946, this organization was given the additional duty of supplying Third Army headquarters with sufficient personnel and equipment for a reproduction detachment.

b. Educational Program. The only education program carried on other than our usual on the job training was the required I & E Schools. Beginning 1 June 1946, one man was sent each week to the I&E Discussion Leaders School.

#### c. Employment of Troops.

1. The only technical section producing at all at the beginning of this period was the reproduction company. During the middle month of the period four experienced Master Sergeants were received so it was possible to revive the Photomapping and Drafting schools and start a surveying school. By the end of the period the fruits of these schools were being received as productive work was being turned out again after a lapse of four months.

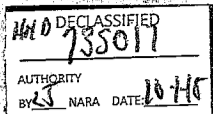
2. Copies of the Operation Reports on the Mapping activities of this organization, as submitted to OCE, USFET, are attached as Annexes "A", "B", and "C".

#### d. Organization and Training.

1. A majority of the troops were employed in the normal administrative and housekeeping tasks and the technical platoons were just limping along producing on a limited scale due to the reduction in assigned personnel.

2. A basic as well as a technical training program was adhered to throughout the entire period. The program was outlined to allow for production and on the job training from Monday morning to Friday noon (36 hours). Friday afternoon was spent in review of basic subjects and two hours of orientation. The basic subjects stressed most were Interior Guard, Military Courtesy and School of the Soldier which all new replacements were deficient in. Saturday mornings were spent in police and inspections.

e. Redeployment Effect. Technically, the organization was still in a sad shape due to redeployment. At the end of the period the Battalion was reduced in Officer strength to five Officers which included the Commanding Officer and Battalion surgeon.



f. Movements and Missions Assigned. There were no changes in assigned missions and no movements were undertaken.

#### IV. SUPPLY AND LOGISTICS.

a. Ammunition Stock. The remainder of the basic load of ammunition, except Chemical warfare service, was drawn and stored in the battalion ammunition storage room.

b. Billeting. The task of requisitioning billets and getting them furnished for the satellite community was started. Fifteen houses werettaken over initially.

c. Food and Clothing.

1. The variety and quality of foods furnished were much better and even though the ration issue was cut there was sufficient for all.

2. In line with dressing up the occupation, additional items of clothing were authorized, drawn and issued. Shortages still exist in chevrons and patches. There also was no khaki clothing available.

d. Gasoline, Oil and Lubricants, Fuel and Coal.

1. Even though gasoline was rationed, there was always sufficient available to operate the vehicles and kitchen units. The petroleum consumed throughout the period was 21,900 gallons of gasoline and 1,970 quarts of oil, with the resulting average mileage per gallon for all vehicles of 9.35 miles per gallon.

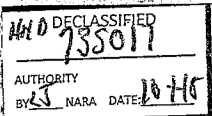
2. The solid fuel consumed during the period was 164 tons of coal and briquets.

e. Post Exchange Activities. During the entire period, the issue of common items of PX supplies was sufficient but due to change of Depots and poor planning on the part of the PX people, this organization went without special items for a two month period. A letter was sent to the theater PX officer, explaining the situation and a supplementary issue was drawn.

f. Procurement Activities. On 5 April 1946, all unit purchasing and contracting authority was withdrawn. From that time on supplies and equipment had to be purchased through the special staff sections of Army.

g. Table of Organization and Equipment. No additional personnel were requested to man the Third Army Detachment, but a special list of equipment was submitted for approval to cover the equipment picked up for the Detachment.

h. Use of German Civilian Labor. An allocation of 170 persons was received to cover the German help at this installation. There were no changes in policy.



V. COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORTATION.

a. Critical Shortage of Vital Materials. The shortage of spare parts for motor vehicles was so acute that about one tenth of the vehicles were dead lined at all times due to lack of replacements parts.

VI. LAW AND ORDER

a. Black Market Activities. It was known that small time black market operations were going on because most men had more money than on their currency control books but it was too difficult to prove.

b. Court Martial Cases. Only five men of this organization were tried by Military Courts during this period. Two men were tried by Special Courts and three by Summary Courts. No offence was prevalent in a majority of cases.

c. Discipline. Due to the receipt of young untrained and irresponsible replacements it was necessary to take more stringent measures to promote better appearance, discipline and military courtesy. From 7 May 1946 all men were required to stand reveille formation, have lights out in quarters by tattoo and be in bed by bed check at 23:00 hours.

d. Traffic Control. One of the units in the area had some surplus men so an Military Police Detachment was formed to patrol the Bensheim Zwingenberg area to enforce the speed and uniform regulations. Towards the end of the period the local security troops thought the speed limit too low so they came and removed the signs.

VII. MEDICAL AFFAIRS.

a. Dental Activities. The mobile dental detachment remained with this organization until 3 June 1946. During their stay every man received all dental treatment necessary.

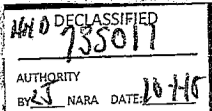
b. Preventative Medicine.

1. The general health of the battalion was excellent. During the period nine men were hospitalized with the resulting loss of 156 man days.

2. The battalion operated its own dispensary with a medical officer in attendance throughout the entire period.

3. Sanitation throughout the entire period was excellent.

4. The venereal disease rate for the month of April was 121.7 cases per thousand per annum, for May was 52.2 cases per thousand per annum and for June was 54.7 cases per thousand per annum. Two pro stations were operated.



c. Redeployment Effect. The last two men of the detachment were redeployed. Men were asked to volunteer for medical work and three men were then trained by the battalion Surgeon to assist in the operation of the dispensary.

#### VIII. ARMY WELFARE

a. Athletics and Athletic Facilities. The sports participated in by men of this battalion are as follows:

1. Soft Ball. A soft ball league was started on 10 April 1946. The league consisted of ten teams from organizations in this vicinity and included a team from each of our three companies. Two diamonds, one in Bensheim and one in Zwingenberg, were prepared and dedicated as Roosevelt and Truman Fields respectively. Each team played at least twice a week until the league closed on 1 June 1946. The 3532 QM Co team led the league with our CO "A" third, H & S, fourth and "B" Co. tied for fifth place.

2. All men wishing to try out for the hard ball team reported about the first of April and had nightly practice sessions until the first game, played in the first week in June. From then on a game was scheduled with teams of Darmstadt twice weekly. There were not enough ball clubs to form a league and all games were played in the Darmstadt Yankee Stadium.

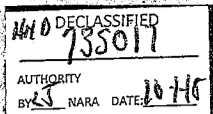
3. Swimming. The small Battalion swimming pool was opened for business on 3 April 1946. As our pool was too small to accommodate the entire battalion, the Jugenheim municipal pool was requisitioned for three days a week for the exclusive use of this organization. As sufficient men did not patronize the Jugenheim pool it was returned a month later. The battalion pool continued to be very popular.

b. Enlisted Men and Officers Clubs.

1. Both enlisted men's clubs were in full operation and doing a great deal of business. A First Three Graders Club was opened in Zwingenberg for all first three grades in the battalion. All three clubs were managed by the special service officer and operated out of the same fund. The clubs value was greatly enhanced by the ample supply of American Whiskey that we were allocated.

2. The Officer's Club (Odenwald) popularity grew by leaps and bounds with the acquisition of a new band.

c. Furloughs and Passes. Few furloughs were taken due to the requirements as set forth by higher headquarters. Passes were given to the men found most deserving after the Saturday morning inspections.



d. German Youth Program. About the middle of May it was undertaken to interest the local youths in American sports. Several enlisted men in Zwingenberg and Auerbach got the German youth together, through the Burgermeister, and had classes for them. The youths were divided in two groups, those under 12 and those from 12 to 18 years. Both groups practiced twice a week until the end of the period. The plan was well received.

e. Inspections and Investigations. There were no command investigations or inspections of this command during this period.

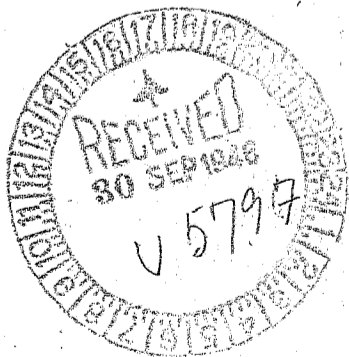
f. Morale of Troops. It is very hard to determine the morale of these young enlisted men who are called soldiers. A very small percentage of them ever saw combat and most have been in the army less than nine months. Everything possible is done for their recreational and social benefit and yet they are never satisfied. The morale of the older boys is very good.

g. Motion Picture Activities. These activities have not altered since the last report.

h. Religious Activities. The only change in services is that Jewish services are no longer available in the area. On Jewish holidays the men are taken to Frankfurt for the services.

i. Entertainment Activities. The organization commanders of this area, seeing the need of a Service Club, when the Red Cross Club closed, got together and decided to open a Service Club in Bensheim. The property was requisitioned, the services of an Army hostess was acquired and the club renovated and put into shape. The Club opened 10 May 1946 and offered dances, movies, games, a library, etc. The club was so poorly patronized that it was forced to close 15 June 1946.

FOR THE COMMANDING OFFICER:



*Wayne W. Walters*  
 WAYNE W. WALTERS  
 Capt. C.E.  
 Battalion Historian.

Not DECLASSIFIED  
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 AUTHORITY  
 BY NARA DATE 10/15/05

HEADQUARTERS

655th ENGINEER TOPOGRAPHIC BATTALION  
 APO 175 US ARMY

3 May 1946

SUBJECT: Report of Mapping Activities.

TO: Chief, Intelligence Division, OCE, USFET.

1. Submitted herewith is the report of Mapping Activities for the period ending 30 April 1946.

a. General

- (1) Visits of Senior Officers: None.
- (2) Change in Officer Personnel:  
 Capt. Wayne W. Walters DS in ZI to dy  
 Lt. Hugh R. Clark trfd to Sep C No 42,  
 Camp Beale, Calif.  
 Lt. Gerald F. Schulte asgd to Det "A" fr Co B  
 Lt. Harry D. Baumann dy to TDY in ZI
- (3) Organization of Unit:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>T/O POSITION</u>	<u>ASN</u>
UNVERFERTH, JOHN E.	Lt. Col.	Bn. Commander	023499
ANDERSON, WILLIAM M.	Capt.	Med. Off.	0466338
WALTERS, WAYNE W.	Capt.	Executive Off.	01101263
MOORE, THOMAS G.	1st Lt.	CO H&S Co	01114664
BAUMANN, HARRY D.	1st Lt.	(TDY in ZI)	01114360
SPACEK, FRANK J.	1st Lt.	CO Co B	0531968
GANAS, CONSTANTINE N	1st Lt.	CO Co A	01594853
GODBOLD, MELVIN H	1st Lt.	Photo Off	01058255
HEINZERLING, JOHN E. III	1st Lt.	Sp Serv Off (TDY in ZI)	02006064
GARICK, ARTHUR J.	1st Lt.	Bn S-4	01062499
JOHNSON, KERMIT Q.	1st Lt.	Bn S-1	0546131
BAYS, GROVER H.	1st Lt.	Repro Off	0549071
YOUNG, THOMAS J.	2nd Lt.	Photo Off	01334800
SCHULTE, GERALD F.	2nd Lt.	CO Det "A"	01335845
YOUNG, THURMAN C.	2nd Lt.	Sur Off	01337116
McWILLIAMS, BAYARD T.	2nd Lt.	Motor Off	01118436
WOLVERTON, ARNOLD V.	CWO	Photo Off (Leave to UK)	W2120424

- (4) Enlisted Men Strength: 188
- (5) Personnel Requirements: Pending.

REF ID: A6635011  
 DECLASSIFIED  
 AUTHORITY: NARA  
 BY: [initials] DATE: 10/16/06

b. Mapping.

(1) New Mapping and Revisions.

- (a) Project: Berlin Town Plan 1:20,000.
  - 1. Sheet #3 is complete and ready for final edit.
  - 2. Sheet #4 is 60% complete.
  - 3. See enclosure #1 for status of individual sheets.
- (b) Project: GSGS 4492 Bavaria 1:50,000.
  - 1. This project is boxed and is being held for additional revision material.
- (c) Project: Frankfurt Town Plan.
  - 1. This project was completed and delivered 2 April 1946.
- (d) Project: GSGS 4507 Germany 1:50,000.
  - 1. See enclosure #2 for status of individual sheets.
- (e) Project: GSGS 4414, Germany 1:25,000.
  - 1. This project has been boxed and is being held pending completion of the Technical Training Program.
- (f) Project: Computations for AFN.
  - 1. This project was completed and delivered 1 April 1946.
- (g) Miscellaneous:
  - 1. 1400 man hours were spent on the Technical Training Program.

(2) Reproduction.

(a) Number of impressions.

Standard Maps	464,600
Special Maps	none
Miscellaneous	170,700
Total impressions	635,300

e. Aerial Photography: No Comment.

d. Control

(1) No horizontal and vertical control project was assigned this Battalion during the month of April.

e. Supplies: The following items are urgently needed:

- (1) Light bulbs - 220 volts, 50 and 100 watts.
- (2) Thinner, lacquer.
- (3) Paper, mounted double, Whatman hot pressed, Class A, sheets 18" x 24".
- (4) Microscopes, line weight.

f. Map distribution: No comment.

For the Commanding Officer:

FRANK J. SPACEK, JR.  
 1st Lt., CE  
 Operations Officer

2 incls.

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AUTHORITY  
BY NARA DATE 10-11-85

HEADQUARTERS

655th ENGINEER TOPOGRAPHIC BATTALION  
APO 175 US ARMY

SH - XO 29  
15 October 1946

SUBJECT: Report of operations from 1 July 1946 to  
30 September 1946.

TO: Commanding General, US Forces, European Theater,  
APO 757, Attention: G-3 Historical Sub-Section;  
through Third US Army.

FOREWORD

The much needed shot in the arm was received with the arrival of officer replacements. Three year regular army men were being assigned in increasing numbers, thus enabling production to be raised. A Satellite Community was assigned to the organization to add to the headaches.

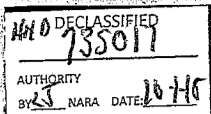
REFERENCES

1. Organization's Official History.
2. Technical Operation Report.
3. Battalion Special Orders.

CONTENTS

1. Administration and Personnel.
2. Security.
3. Troop Occupational Activities.
4. Supply and Logistics.
5. Communication and Transportation.
6. Law and Order.
7. Medical Affairs.
8. Army Welfare.





## I. ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL

### a. Awards and Decorations.

1. Master Sergeant Murray Blau was awarded the Commendation medal by Major General Moore, Theater Chief Engineer, for the excellent work he did in establishing and operating the Theater Map Reproduction Plant.

2. Three men were awarded the Good Conduct Medal.

### b. Currency Control.

1. One unannounced check of all currency control books was made to adjust the balance of cash available. It was suprising to note that 95% of the enlisted men had the exact amount of cash that their books showed.

2. Currency Control ended 15 September when all Allied Marks were turned in for conversion to Military Payment Certificates.

### c. Leaves, Furloughs and Passes.

1. Due to small leave quotes and more stringent requirements before a man could go on leave, few leaves and furloughs were taken. Twenty-six enlisted men and one officer availed themselves of the privilege.

2. Off duty hour and three day passes were freely given to deserving men to visit friends and the surrounding places of interest.

d. Morale of Troops. The morale of the troops was definitely on the up grade. The reasons were the rapid redeployment of selectees and most replacements were regular Army men.

e. Postal Activities. The efficient postal service continued throughout the period with several lapses due to shipping and bad weather.

### f. Promotions, Demotions and Reassignments.

1. Promotions were greatly reduced, as each man had to pass rigid requirements both technical and military before he was eligible.

1 EM promoted to Staff Sgt.

1 EM promoted to Sgt.

7 EM promoted to T/4

4 EM promoted to Cpl.

37 EM promoted to T/5

70 EM promoted to Pfc.

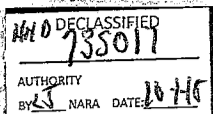
No officers were promoted.

2. The following reductions were made.

1 T/4 reduced to Pvt.

1 Cpl. reduced to Pvt.

10 Pfc's. reduced to Pvt.



3. Two enlisted men went before Section VIII boards and were sent to the ZI for discharge.

g. Redeployment and Replacements.

1. Redeployment continued unabated, with men leaving months before their time was up according to previous forecasts. Seventy-four enlisted men and seven officers were transferred out leaving the battalion with only five officers present for duty for over a month.

2. The Replacement channels were kinder to us for once, for the officers and NCO replacements were well qualified to fulfill their positions. Over half of the enlisted men replacements were three year regular army men. Seventy enlisted men, five officers and two chief warrant officers were transferred in.

3. One man extended his enlistment to three years.

h. Safety Program. The safety program continued but was seriously hampered by the loss of the area Military Police. It was enforced that all drivers slow down in small towns and built up areas.

i. Satellite Community. Even though the request to establish a Satellite in the Zwingenberg-Auerbach area was submitted in April, it was approved in June. No additional personnel were received or authorized, so the duties fell on the already overworked staff of the Battalion. The mother community did send inventory teams to requisition the houses chosen by us. At the end of the period, there were eleven families residing in our satellite.

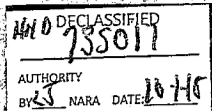
II. SECURITY.

a. Black Market Activities.

1. Through the prescribed check of the currency control books, it was evident that about 95% of the men were speculating in the Black Market on a minor scale as most had the exact amount of cash as in their books. It was found necessary to take off the control book all purchases in the PX and enlisted men clubs in order to make this speculating to no avail.

2. The two men who were caught speculating in foreign currency were tried, found guilty, and sentenced to long prison terms. The result of their trial was read to all men and posted on the bulletin boards as a warning.

b. Civilian Police. German Civilian Police were continued to be used to guard dependent homes and the posts at our installations which did not require military personnel.



c. Security Raids. Only one raid was performed by members of this command. This on the dwelling place of a former employee and equipment was recovered which had been taken from one of our homes.

### III. TROOP OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES

a. Assigned Missions. The assigned missions were not changed but keeping the three satellite missions (Casey Jones Project, Third Army Det. and Theater Map Reproduction Plant) up to strength with trained replacements was rapidly becoming an impossibility.

b. Education Program.

1. Men were still sent to the I & E Discussions Leaders School to insure that there were trained men in each company capable of conducting the schools.

2. On 5 August 1946, the first Command School was held for officers and NCO's. From then on the schools were held each Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 1600 to 1700. The first series of lectures covered company administration as it was felt that it needed reviewing first.

3. A weekly lecture on venereal disease was also prescribed for all enlisted men due to the sudden rise in the battalion VD rate.

c. Employment of Troops.

1. Both Photomapping and Reproduction were in production throughout the period. The plant was not running at full capacity due to lack of personnel but all required work was being turned out. There were no assigned projects for the survey platoon so they continued on with their training.

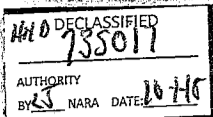
2. Copies of the Operation Reports on the Mapping activities of this organization as submitted to OCE, USFET, are attached as Annexes "A" "B" and "C".

d. Technical Inspections. Major Brooks of the Operations Section OCE, USFET inspected this battalion on the 15 August 1946. He seemed very pleased with the operations of the organization. No official comment has been received as a result of his visit.

e. Organization and Training.

1. Over half of the men were still employed in normal administrative and housekeeping tasks but the technical platoons had upped their production figures, even though the number of personnel was decreasing.

2. On 9 July 1946, in compliance with an Army Directive, the training schedule was cut to 40 hours per week. The entire eight hour days of Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday were spent on on the job productive training. Wednesday morning was spent in basic military subjects. Wednesday



afternoons were to be used by the men for care and cleaning of their equipment and policing of themselves. The entire Saturday morning was reserved for inspections in ranks and quarters.

f. Redeployment Effect. Technically, the organization was still in a sad shape. By the time the men had finished the technical school, they would be redeployed. The present for duty strength was about half that authorized by the T/O & E.

#### IV. SUPPLY AND LOGISTICS.

##### a. Ammunition Stock and Disposal. T

1. The basic load of ammunition for the battalion was stored and locked but still available in case of trouble.
2. All captured ammunition that was found, stored in the supply rooms with the captured arms, was destroyed.

b. Billeting. Finding suitable quarters for all dependent families was becoming ever more difficult. The list of Nazi members was decreasing and the people whose houses and furniture could not be taken was increasing. Also the civilian population was being further overcrowded by the deportees from the occupied countries and Austria.

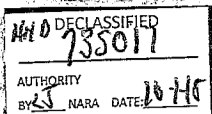
##### c. Food and Clothing.

1. Due to the world wide food shortage the ration scale of the army was reduced, but all men continued to receive sufficient. The beginning of the fresh milk issue was well appreciated by the men.
2. Even though approved for off duty wear, khaki clothing was still unavailable. No acute shortages existed in other items of clothing.

##### d. Gasoline, Oil and Lubricants; Fuel and Coal.

1. Gasoline rationing was being felt as the Battalion made long hauls for supplies and trucks for the Community used up quite a bit. The petroleum consumed throughout the period was 29,900 gallons of gasoline and 1760 quarts of oil with the resulting average mileage per gallon for all vehicles of 10.37 miles.
2. The solid fuel consumed during this period was 67 tons of coke and coal.

e. Post Exchange Activities. For the first two months of the period the battalion again was shorted on the issue of special items. The Battalion drew on its entire strength from the Frankfurt depot. For these two months the organization received only three cameras, no watches, radios or other expensive items. This matter was brought to the attention of the Third Army Exchange Officer and he obtained an additional break down of more desirable items for us. The issue of common items was plentiful.



f. Table of Organization and Equipment. A tentative modified list of equipment was submitted to cover the excess equipment held by the battalion, Third Army Detachment and the base Plant in Frankfurt. The only one that was returned approved by the end of the period was the one for the Battalion Plant.

g. Use of German Civilian Labor. The battalion effected a reduction in the number of German civilians hired. There was rapid turnover in this personnel due to various reasons.

#### V. COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORTATION

a. Critical Shortage of Vital Materials. The Vehicular spare part shortage continues to be very acute. In fact at times as high as 30% of the assigned vehicles are dead lined due to the lack of this vital necessity.

#### VI. LAW AND ORDER

a. Court Martial Cases. In the Battalion only 16 men were tried by Military Courts. Pvt. Binns was tried by a Third Army General Court for rape and sodomy. The approved sentence was not published by the end of the period. Eight men were tried by a Special Court and Seven by a Summary Court. Officer. The most prevalent offense was curfew violation.

b. Discipline. The emphasis placed on discipline, conduct and appearance was paying off. The VD rate began to fall off and it was so noticeable the Officer from the Inspector General's Office made very favorable comments about the men.

c. Traffic Control. Even though our local MP detachment was withdrawn, there was little traffic violation. Definite speed limits and speed traps were largely responsible.

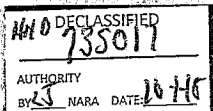
#### VII. MEDICAL AFFAIRS.

a. Dental Activities. Due to the rapid turn over in personnel it was found necessary to request the services of another Dental Detachment. The Dental Officer and van were assigned to the battalion on 15 September 1946 and began to work immediately.

b. Preventative Medicine.

1. The general health of the battalion was excellent. During the period 39 men were hospitalized with the resulting loss of 473 man days.

2. The Battalion operated its own dispensary with a medical officer in attendance throughout the period. The



Battalion Surgeon, Capt. Anderson, who came overseas with the organization was redeployed 23 August 1946 and was replaced by Lt. Hughes.

3. Sanitation throughout the entire period was excellent.

4. The venereal disease rate for the month of July was 154.8 cases per thousand per annum, (two of the three cases were acquired by contacts before being assigned to the battalion), the rate for August was 108.2 cases per thousand per annum and the rate for September was 267.0 cases per thousand per annum. The September rate was largely due to two diseased men who acquired both gonorrhea and syphilis at the same time from one contact. Due to the sharp rise in rate a vigorous anti VD campaign was started.

5. All German civilian employees who worked as maids or handled food were given a complete physical, including X-Rays. They all were given immunization shots.

e. Replacements. Two excellent aid men were assigned to the Medical Detachment and with an additional transfer, brought the Medical detachment to one under strength.

#### VIII. ARMY WELFARE

a. Athletics and Athletic Facilities. The sports participated in by men of this battalion are as follows:

1. The base ball team flourished until the middle of August. Although not in a league they played change games with several ball clubs of Darmstadt twice weekly.

2. The Battalion swimming pool was still the favorite place of recreation for some men until we were forced to close the pool 1 September 1946 due to cold weather.

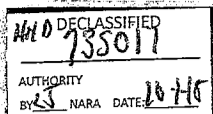
3. Each company was given permission to organize foot ball teams and sufficient equipment was received in September enabling the teams to hold their first scrimmage before the close of the period.

b. Barber Shops. Due to the restrictions on the spending of script it was necessary to establish two battalion barber shops. The shops were open from 12:00 to 21:00 each day but Sunday and all services were free.

c. Enlisted Men and Officer Clubs.

1. All three enlisted men's clubs continued to operate at full speed. The rules were tightened to make the clubs a little more desirable and it was found necessary to place voluntary MPs on duty to eject any one getting too noisy or unruly. The liquor prices were reduced to keep from building up too large a profit.

2. The Officers' Club (Odenwald) still remained a popular retreat. Its charm grew with the advent of American female dependents.



d. Furloughs and Passes.

1. Due to eligibility restrictions placed on Furloughs by the Theater, few men took them during the period but all men who had been in the theater six months and wanted to go were given furloughs. A quota was received on 21 September 1946 for all possible places of interest and some of the quota had to be declined for there were not enough men available to fill it.

2. Passes were freely given during off duty hours and sponsored trips were taken to the surrounding sights of interest, places of enjoyment as well as sports contests.

e. Inspections and Investigations.

1. A Third Army Administrative Inspection Team headed by Lt. Col. Brownlow, inspected the Battalion on 22 July 1946. The Battalion received an overall rating of Satisfactory and all deficiencies as noted were corrected immediately.

2. The Battalion received its annual Inspector General Department inspection from 12 to 14 August 1946. The inspection was conducted by Lt. Col. Bern and Capt. Clark of the Third Army IG Section. The overall Battalion rating was Excellent.

3. Capt. Paul Bayergeon of the Military Division, OCE, USFET, conducted a Command inspection and seemed to be well pleased.

f. Morale of Troops. It was felt that the morale of the troops was steadily rising. The bad influences were being eliminated by Section VIII and Courts Martial. Selective service men were being redeployed rapidly and all was being done for the welfare of the men, as follows:

1. A tailor shop was opened on 1 July 1946, to give free service to all men.

2. An ice cream bar was opened in July, which served milked milks, sodas, sundaes, etc.

g. Religious Services.

1. Catholic services were available to the men in Bensheim and Darmstadt with transportation available to the services in Bensheim.

2. Were successful in having a Protestant Chaplain come and hold services in the Battalion Area each Sunday.

3. The nearest Jewish services were held in Heidelberg and Frankfurt.

FOR THE COMMANDING OFFICER:

*Wayne W. Walters*  
 WAYNE W. WALTERS  
 Capt. G.E.  
 Battalion Historian.

AUTHORITY  
 BY LS NARA DATE: 10-1-16  
 735011

S-3

HEADQUARTERS

655th ENGINEER TOPOGRAPHIC BATTALION  
 APO 175 US ARMY

SH - XO 29  
 18 December 1946

SUBJECT: Report of operations from 1 October 1946 to 30 November 1946.

TO : Commanding General, US Forces, European Theater, APO 757, Attention: G-3 Historical Sub-Section; through Third US Army.

FOREWORD

This report covers the period prior to the inactivation of this unit, a period which was filled with speculation concerning the eventual disposition of personnel and the type of a topographic unit which might be retained in the theater.

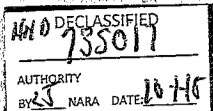
REFERENCES

1. Organization's Official History.
2. Technical Operation Report.
3. Battalion Special Orders.

CONTENTS

1. Administration and Personnel.
2. Security.
3. Troop Occupational Activities.
4. Supply and logistics.
5. Communication and Transportation.
6. Law and Order.
7. Medical Affairs.
8. Army Welfare.





## 1. ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL

### a. Awards and Decorations.

1. No awards or decorations were given during the period of this report.

### b. Leaves, Furloughs and Passes.

1. Due to small leave quotas, the remoteness of leave centers from this installation, the constant redeployment of personnel to the ZI, few leaves and furloughs were taken. Three officers and 7 enlisted men availed themselves of leave privileges.

2. A limited number of special privilege passes were made available to deserving personnel starting 3 Oct. Increases in the number of special privilege passes came as a reward for good troop deportment.

c. Morale of troops. Troop morale remained on a desirable level though a certain lowering was evident commensurate with rumors concerning inactivation of the unit.

d. Postal activities. An efficient postal service was maintained throughout the period despite certain adverse conditions within the United States affecting transportation.

### e. Promotions, Demotions and Reclassifications.

1. The number of promotions was lessened, the majority being given to regular army personnel and with an emphasis placed on the military and technical knowledge of personnel before consideration.

- 1 EM promoted to T/3
- 1 EM promoted to Sgt
- 3 EM promoted to Cpl.
- 11 EM promoted to T/4
- 28 EM promoted to T/5
- 38 EM promoted to Pfc.

1 EM was commissioned from enlisted status to 1st Lt.

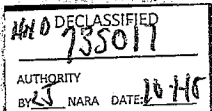
1 EM was commissioned from enlisted status to Captain.

2 EM were commissioned from enlisted status upon completion of Company Grade Officers course at the Seckenheim School Center and reassigned to this unit.

to/

1 Officer was promoted First Lieutenant.

1 Officer was promoted to Captain



2. The following reductions were made:
  - 4 T/5s reduced to Pvt.
  - 8 Pfc's reduced to Pvt.

3. Seven enlisted men were reviewed by a board of officers; four of the seven were recommended for discharge.

f. Redeployment and Replacements.

1. Redeployment of non-regular army men continued up to the date of the inactivation of the unit; the effect of redeployment was keenly felt throughout all sections; all concerned, though, welcomed the release of what might be termed "transients".

2. Few enlisted replacements were received but 4 EM extended their enlistments to three years while two reenlisted for one and two year periods respectively. Two officers changed categories to Category VII.

3. The Battalion Commander was relieved from assignment on the 26 November and assigned to the 1681st Engr Survey Liaison Team, Hq Comd, USFET; command of the battalion was assumed by the Battalion executive officer, Captain Wayne W. Walters.

g. Satellite Community. The burden of the Satellite Community under this unit has been great due to non-cooperation of units in the area to furnish men and vehicles. This unit has operated the community practically lone-handed. Dependent families of this unit were about 50% of the community.

## II. SECURITY

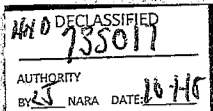
a. Black Market Activities.

1. No evidence of "Black Market" activity was shown during this period. The issuance of scrip money sounded the death knell to even the bartering of small items.

b. Civilian Police. The use of German Civilian Police continued supplementing military guards at dependent homes and at units of this installation.

c. Security Raids. The necessity for performing any raids upon civilian dwellings did not present itself during this period. Undesirable civilian employees had been weeded out and discharged from employment in previous periods.

d. The completion of a fence around the area greatly facilitated the safeguarding of property. All personnel, civilian and military, were obliged to pass through one entrance.



### III. TROOP OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES

a. Assigned Missions. The battalion's mission of supplying personnel for the "Casey Jones Project", Detachment "A" and the Third Army reproduction detachment continued to present a drain on this unit.

b. Education Program.

1. Sufficient trained personnel were present within the unit to conduct the I & E program thereby eliminating the necessity of sending men to the I & E Discussion Leaders' School.

2. One officer and three enlisted men attended an approximately four day orientation course on German Youth Activities conducted at Assmanshausen, Germany.

3. The Command School for officers and NCO's was continued; the mission and methods for performing the mission of individual companies of this battalion were enlightening subjects for discussion.

4. Weekly lectures on VD by the Battalion Medical Officer were coordinated with a venereal disease control program in operation amongst the companies. The success of venereal disease control training was evident in the lowered rate of infection.

c. Employment of Troops.

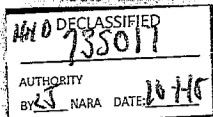
1. The amount of work accomplished throughout the period was greatly lessened by the lack of trained personnel. Incoming troops who had completed topographic and reproduction training at the Engineer School, Ft. Belvoir, were not immediately able to offset the effects of redeployment. The survey platoon continued in its technical training having had no assigned project.

2. Copies of the Operations Reports on the Mapping activities of this organization as submitted to OCE, USFET, are attached as Annexes "A" and "B".

d. Organization and Training.

1. Administrative and housekeeping duties absorbed the time of the majority of troops though a definite effort was made to hold such activities to a minimum and to give on the job technical training to as many men as possible. A more efficient functioning of the unit was possible since nearly all companies were staffed with a full complement of officers.

2. On the job productive training consumed four 8 hour days per week; Wednesday mornings were spent in basic military subjects while Saturday mornings were devoted to inspections of troops and troop billets.



e. Redeployment Effect. Redeployment cut its marks in all sections of the unit; the anxiety of those men awaiting return to the United States contributed to a lowering of morale and efficiency amongst remaining regular army men. The rapid turn-over of enlisted personnel has finally shown itself to have been responsible for large amounts of loss, damage and destruction of government property.

#### IV. SUPPLY AND LOGISTICS.

##### a. Ammunition Stock and Disposal.

1. Basic amounts of ammunition remained stored and locked in a convenient and centrally located store-room for immediate issue to troops in the vent of trouble.
2. Periodic inspections of unit installations for captured ammunition and fire arms were conducted; no violations of existing regulations governing captured ammunition and fire arms were uncovered.

b. Billeting. Redeployment left no instances of over-crowding of billets. In some cases heating and sanitary facilities were slightly inadequate but due mostly to the lack of materials. On the whole billets were, and always have been, the best available.

##### c. Food and Clothing.

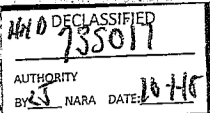
1. Some items of food were obtainable in limited quantities, particularly fresh meat and vegetables; several issues of fresh milk were greatly appreciated by the men. The mess personnel were conscientious in preparing and serving food in the best manner.

2. The majority of items of clothing were available in sufficient quantities. Some off-shade outer garments continued to be issued from depots in lieu of "Shade 33" garments. An initial issue of low quarter shoes for almost all personnel was received during the period with a resultant boost in troop morale.

##### d. Gasoline, Oil and Lubricants; Fuel and Coal.

1. Sufficient supplies of gasoline and lubricants were obtainable throughout the period. The supply of Diesel Oil for generators in our electrical plant was difficult to obtain and necessitated a slow down in technical work.

2. Fuel (coal) was still being allotted on the basis of 8 pounds per man per day, a quantity that was insufficient for our needs in heating work areas of the unit.



e. Post Exchange Activities. A better issue of all items was given to our unit PX's after complaints were made to the issuing depot on the shortage of more desirable gifts and necessities.

f. Use of German Civilian Labor. German civilian labor continued to be used; some for technical work, but mostly for kitchen help and fatigue work in the unit's area.

#### V. COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORTATION

a. Critical Shortage of Vital Materials. Spare parts were not forthcoming and as a consequence, a great percentage of vehicles were deadlined, some lacking only minor parts.

#### VI. LAW AND ORDER

a. Court Martial Cases. Nine men were tried by Military courts, two by Special Court and seven by a Summary Court Officer.

b. Discipline. Concerted efforts were made by all unit commanders to improve troop discipline; these efforts showed considerable results until about the middle of November when rampant deactivation rumors undermined all previous efforts.

#### VII. MEDICAL AFFAIRS.

a. Dental Activities. The services of the dental officer assigned to the unit were appreciated by all personnel. The majority of men were in need of prompt dental attention which was completed on the 5th Nov 1946 when the mobile dental detachment was transferred to another unit.

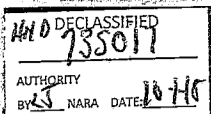
#### b. Preventative Medicine.

1. The general health of the Battalion during this period was excellent. 38 men were hospitalized with the resultant loss of 521 man days.

2. The Battalion operated its own dispensary with a medical officer in attendance throughout the period. The Battalion Medical Officer, Lt. Thomas J. Hughes was promoted to captain on 23 Nov 1946.

3. The venereal disease rate for the month of October was 270.8 cases per 1000 per annum; the rate for November was 253 cases per 1000 per annum.

4. Periodic medical examinations were made of all German Civilian employees working as food handlers and KP's.



### VIII. ARMY WELFARE

a. Athletics and Athletic Facilities. Athletic activity was confined mostly to Football during this period; teams were organized amongst the companies and several inter-company games were played. Competition was good and the majority of personnel showed a keen and lively interest in the sport. Sufficient playing equipment for the several teams was available.

b. Enlisted Men and Officer Clubs. Three enlisted men's and one officers' club continued to operate throughout the period; dance bands furnished music several nights weekly and entertainment groups were secured through the unit's Special Services at frequent intervals.

c. Inspections and Investigations.

1. Capt. Witchell, Hqs. Third US Army, inspected administrative records of the unit on 7 Nov 1946. On the 15 Nov 1946, a Third US Army Inspection Team inspected administrative records and clubs of this unit; and overall rating of Excellent was given by the team.

2. Inspection of all Ordnance equipment was made on the 21 Nov 1946 by a Third US Army Ordnance Technical Inspection Team.

d. Morale of Troops. Consideration for troop morale was paramount; everything possible was done to make existing facilities pleasing.

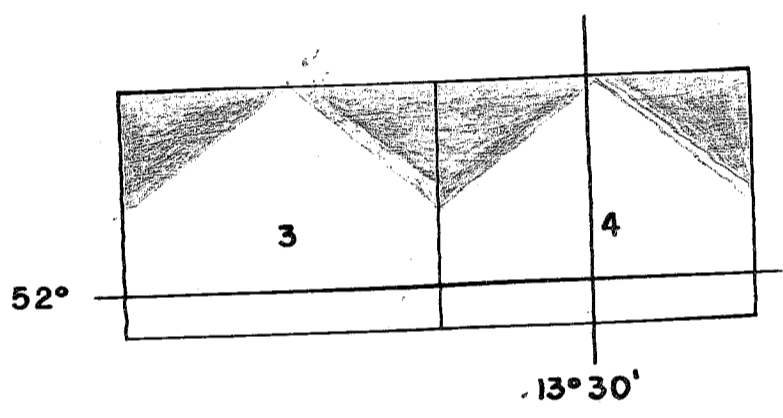
e. Religious Services. Transportation was furnished men desiring to attend Catholic Services in Bensheim. Other Catholic services were available in Darmstadt. Protestant services were held in the battalion area each Sunday. Services for Jewish personnel were available in Heidelberg and Frankfurt.

FOR THE COMMANDING OFFICER:







*Wayne W. Walters*  
WAYNE W. WALTERS  
Captain CE  
Battalion Historian.

UNCLASSIFIED  
 755017  
 AUTHORITY  
 BY: [initials] NARA DATE: 10-16-10

# BERLIN TOWN PLAN

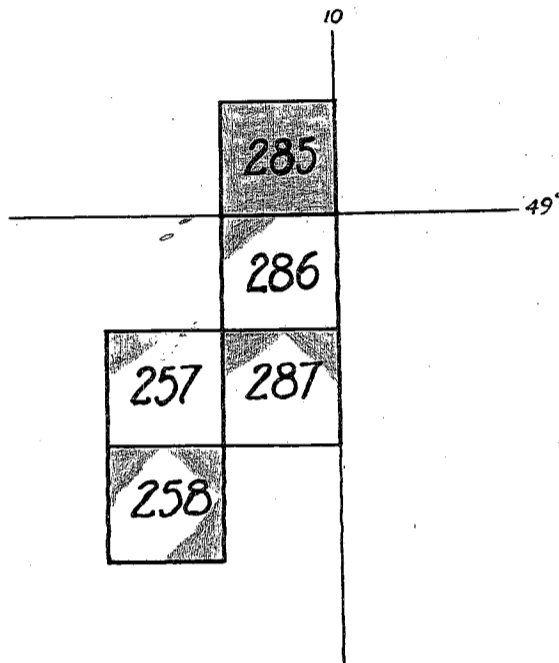


## REVISION







-  REVISION IN PROGRESS
-  REVISION COMPLETED
-  EDIT COMPLETED
-  PROOF STAGE
-  FINAL KODALINES PREPARED
-  PROGRESS SINCE LAST REPORT (ANY RED SYMBOL)

AUTHORITY  
 BY LS NARA DATE: 10-1-16

# GSGS 4507



## STATUS

-  DRAFTING STARTED.
-  DRAFTING COMPLETED.
-  EDIT COMPLETED.
-  PROOF STAGE.
-  KODALINES PREPARED.
-  PROGRESS SINCE LAST REPORT.  
(ANY RED SYMBOL.)



DECLASSIFIED  
 735017  
 AUTHORITY  
 BY SS NARA DATE 10/16/15

HEADQUARTERS

655th ENGINEER TOPOGRAPHIC BATTALION  
 APO 475 US ARMY

4 June 1946

SUBJECT: Report of Mapping Activities

TO: Chief, INT DIV, OCE

0001968

1. Submitted herewith is the Report of Mapping Activities for the period ending 31 May 1946.

a. General

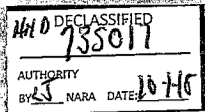
- (1) Visits of Senior Officers: None.
- (2) Change in Officer Personnel:  
 1st Lt. Melvin H. Gedbold trfd to 2nd Reinf Depot  
 Namur, Belgium
- (3) 1st Lt. Thomas G. Moore trfd to 2nd Reinf Depot,  
 Namur, Belgium  
 1st Lt. Robert K. Boull assgd and jd  
 2nd Lt. Thurman C. Young assumed comd of H&S Co.
- (3) Organization of Unit:

NAME	RANK	T/O POSITION	ASN
UNVERFERTH, JOHN E.	Lt. Col.	Bn. Commander	023499
ANDERSON, WILLIAM M.	Capt.	Med Off	0466338
WALTERS, WAYNE W.	Capt.	Executive Off	01101263
BAUMANN, HARRY D.	1st Lt.	(TDY in ZI)	01114360
SPACEK, FRANK J. Jr.	1st Lt.	CO Co B	0531968
GANAS, CONSTANTINE N.	1st Lt.	CO Co A	01594853
HEINZERLING, JOHN E III	1st Lt.	Sp Serv Off (TDY in ZI)	02006064
GARICK, ARTHUR J.	1st Lt.	Bn S-4	01062499
JOHNSON, KERMIT Q.	1st Lt.	Bn S-1	0546131
BAYS, GROVER H.	1st Lt.	Repro Off	0549071
POULL, ROBERT K	1st Lt.	Asst Bn S-1	0540175
YOUNG, THOMAS J. X	2nd Lt.	Photo Off	01334800
SCHULTE, GERALD F.	2nd Lt.	CO Det "A"	01335845
YOUNG, THURMAN C.	2nd Lt.	CO H&S Co	01337116
McWILLIAMS, BAYARD T.	2nd Lt.	Motor Off	01118436
WOLVERTON, ARNOLD V.	CWO	Photo Off (Leave to UK)	W2120424

- (4) Enlisted Men Strength: 249
- (5) Personnel Requirements: Pending.

b. Mapping

- (1) New Mapping and Revisions
  - (a) Project: GSGS 4492 Bavaria 1:50,000.
    - 1. This project is boxed and is being held for additional revision material.
  - (b) Project: GSGS 4507 Germany 1:50,000.
    - 1. See inclosure #1 for status of individual sheets.



- (c) Project: Berlin Town Plan.
  - 1. This project is being held pending completion of the technical training program.
  - 2. No progress since last month.
- (d) Project: GSGS 4414 Germany 1:25,000.
  - 1. This project has been boxed and is being held pending completion of the technical training program.
- (e) Miscellaneous:
  - 1. 6263 man hours have been spent this month for technical training.

(2) Reproduction

- (a) Number of impressions:
  - Standard maps 283,400
  - Special maps none
  - Miscellaneous - 335,100
  - Total impressions 618,500

e. Aerial Photography: No comment.

d. Control:

- (1) No horizontal and vertical control project was assigned this Bn during the month of May 1946.

e. Supplies: The following items are urgently needed:

- (1) Tape, Scotch, transparent.
- (2) Tape, Scotch, red
- (3) Paper, Contact Printing. Kodalith, size 24" x 30".
- (4) Corn Starch.
- (5) Sponges, Viscose
- (6) Brush, Scrubbing, Lithographic Plate
- (7) Mercury Vapor Tubes. (GE 160H9T1S1 Part No. 9010) for Model "E" Ozalid Whiteprint Machine.
- (8) Light bulbs, 220 volts, 50 and 100 watts.
- (9) Microscopes, line weight
- (10) Pen points for blue lining - HUNT No. 102  
 HUNT No. 104  
 ESTERBROOK NO 62 Crow Quill  
 ESTERBROOK No B-6 Speedball
- (11) Bristol Board - 22" x 30"
- (12) Paper, mounted double, Whatman hot presses, Class A, sheets 18" x 24".
- (13) Sewing needles for Pin Vice

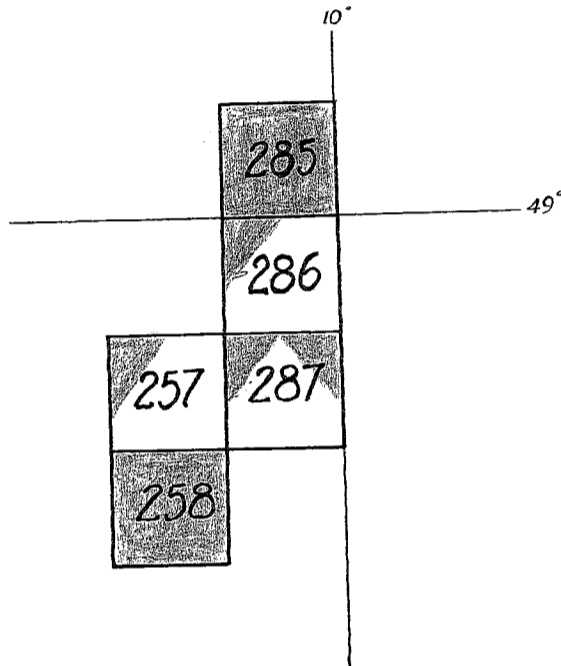
For the Commanding Officer:

FRANK J. SPACEK, Jr.  
 1st Lt. CE  
 Operations Officer







APPENDIX "B"

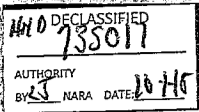
1410 DECLASSIFIED  
 735017  
 AUTHORITY  
 BY SS NARA DATE 10-16-10

# GSGS 4507



## STATUS

-  DRAFTING STARTED.
-  DRAFTING COMPLETED.
-  EDIT COMPLETED.
-  PROOF STAGE.
-  KODALINES PREPARED.
-  PROGRESS SINCE LAST REPORT.  
(ANY RED SYMBOL.)



## HEADQUARTERS

655th ENGINEER TOPOGRAPHIC BATTALION  
 APO 175

US ARMY

3 July 1946

SUBJECT: Report of Mapping Activities

TO: Chief, INT Div, OCE

0001968

1. Submitted herewith is the Report of Mapping Activities for the period ending 30 June 1946.

## a. General

## (1) Visits of Senior Officers:

Lt. Col. R. H. JOHNSON, CE, OCE, USFET, 27 June 1946.  
 Lt. Col. W. L. WINEGAR, CE, OCE, USFET, 27 June 1946.

## (2) Change in Officer Personnel:

- (a) 1st Lt. HENRY H. COMBS assgd to Bn and assgd Detachment Commander of Detch "A".
- (b) Capt. PAUL A. BAYORGEON, Capt. WILLIAM SCRILIO, Capt. CHARLES SACHSENMAIER assgd from OCE, USFET and placed on DS with OCE, USFET.

## (c) The following listed officers relieved from assignment for return to ZI for redeployment:

1st Lt. KERMIT Q. JOHNSON  
 1st Lt. ROBERT N. POULL  
 1st Lt. FRANK J. SPACEK, Jr.  
 1st Lt. CONSTANTINE H. GANAS  
 1st Lt. ARTHUR J. GARICK  
 1st Lt. GROVER H. BAYS  
 2nd Lt. THOMAS J. YOUNG  
 2nd Lt. BAYARD T. McWILLIAMS

- (d) 1st Lt. JOHN E. HEINZERLING III was relieved from assignment and TDY in ZI.

## (3) Organization of Unit:

- (a) Officers - see Incl. #1.
- (b) Enlisted Men Strength - 278.

## (4) Personnel Requirements of Unit: See Incl. #2.

## b. Mapping

## (1) New mapping and revisions

- (a) No new mapping was assigned this Unit during the month of June.
- (b) Project: Revision of 26 sheets, Bavaria 1:50,000 GSGS 4492. This project is boxed and is being held for additional revision material.
- (c) Project: GSGS 4507, Germany 1:50,000 has not been completed. For progress on all sheets on Printing Request, Ref. C-5b, dated 13 May 1946 (your Hdqs.), with the exception of sheet 258 (which has been completed and delivered to Mahlheim Engr. Base Map Depot) refer to Incl. #3.

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 AUTHORITY  
 BY SS NARA DATE 10-16-16

(d) Project: GSGS 4414, Germany, 1:25,000:9  
 - IRP No. 155 - the following sheets have been completed and delivered to the Mahlheim Engr Base

Map Depot:  
 4220 4711 4712 4811 4812 4913 4914  
 5310 5327 5921 6117 6421 6519 6723  
 7925

- the following sheets are now in reproduction:  
 6021 7020 7625 7824 6325 8423 8326  
 6625 7518

- the remainder of the sheets on this job order have not been started due to lack of color separations.

IRP NO. 171 - the following sheets have been completed and delivered to the Muhlheim Engr Base  
 Map Depot: 6623 and 6624. Sheet 6925 has not been reproduced due to lack of Color Separation.

IRP NO. 211 - the following sheets have been completed and delivered to the Mahlheim Engr Base

Map Depot:  
 5110 6425 6725 6426 8325 6327 6427  
 6727 6328 6129 6230 6231

- the remainder of the sheets on this job order have not been started due to lack of Color Separations.

Final Edit has been started on sheet 6031. Final edit will be started on sheets 6331, 6232, 6332, 6432 and 6333 as soon as proof copies are run on press. Blue line sheets of 6529 are now 90% complete. Drafting of this sheet should be completed shortly. Editing and border stick-up of sheets 6032, 6024 and 5924 are in progress.

Final Drafting. This Unit has been relieved of the responsibility for completion of final drafting of the following sheets by the Commanding Officer of 1681 Engineer Survey Liaison Team:

5832	5833	5925	5935	5928	5931	6025
6527	5727	5930	6027	6030	6033	6125
6127	6029	5826	5825	5728	6132	5929
5927	6126	5830	5933	6032	5932	6028
6026	6133	5831	5829	5827	5828	

All materials for the above listed sheets, except Aerial photographs, were transferred to HVA XIII.

(e) Project ; Berlin Town Plan.  
 This project is being held pending completion of the Technical Training Program.  
 No progress since last month.

(f) Miscellaneous Work. - Saltzman Reflecting Projector has been set up and put into operation. Model "E" Ozalid Machine cannot be put into operation since Mercury Vapor tubes are at present not available.

1610 DECLASSIFIED  
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 AUTHORITY  
 BY SS NARA DATE 10-16

- The Technical Training Program consists of student drafting course, instruction in editing, computing and plotting control.
- 2,564 man hours have been spent this month in photomapping training.

(2) Reproduction:

- (a) Number of impressions:
- |                   |         |
|-------------------|---------|
| Standard Maps     | 46,100  |
| Special Maps      | none    |
| Miscellaneous     | 749,900 |
| Total impressions | 796,000 |

- (c) Aerial Photography: No Comment.
- d. Control: No horizontal and vertical control project was assigned this Battalion during the month of June 1946.
- e. Supplies: the following items are urgently needed:
- Mercury Vapor tubes - (GE 160H9T1S1 Part No. 9010) for Model "E" Ozalid Whiteprint Machine.
  - Bristol Board - 22" x 30".
  - Paper, Mounted double, Whatman hot pressed, Class A, sheets 18 x 24.
  - Eggshell White Paint - 10 gallons.
  - Scotch tape - red.
  - Scotch tape - transparent.
  - Corn Starch

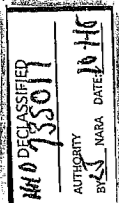
JOHN E. UNVERFERTH  
 Lt. Col. CE  
 Commanding

- 3 Incls:
- #1 Organization of Unit - Officers
  - #2 Personnel Requirements of Unit
  - #3 Progress on GSGS 4507, Germany, 1:50,000

UNIT 655 Engr Topo Bn

Date Submitted 1 July 1946.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>ASN</u>	<u>COMP</u>	<u>ASR</u>	<u>MILSPEC</u>	<u>PRES</u>	<u>DY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>RACE</u>	<u>AGE</u>	<u>VOL</u>	<u>TOT</u>	<u>MOS</u>
												<u>CAT</u>	<u>MIL</u>	<u>SERV</u>
UNVERFERTH, JOHN E.	Lt. Col	023499	RA	103	7915	1 Dec 39	15 Nov 44	W	30					70
ANDERSON, WILLIAM M	Capt.	0466338	ORC	57	D-3325	3 Jul 43	1 Feb 45	W	28	V		6 Sep 46		34
BAYORGEON, PAUL A.	Capt.	01645587	TDY		OCE,									
SACHSENMAIER, CHARLES	Capt.	0453683	TDY		OCE,									
SGRILLO, WILLIAM	Capt.	02041057	TDY		OCE,									
WALTERS, WAYNE W.	Capt.	01101263	AUS	125	7915	27 Jan 36	19 Sep 43	W	31	I				123
COMBS, HENRY H.	1st Lt.	02000862	AUS	108	7917	28 Aug 34	31 Jan 46	W	46	I				69
BAUMANN, HARRY D (TDY)	1st Lt.	01114360	AUS	45	TDY ZI		15 Jul 44	W						
SCHULTE, GERALD F	2nd Lt	01335845	AUS	12	1542	31 Aug 44	2 Jun 45	W	19	V				20
YOUNG, THURMAN C.	2nd Lt	01337116	AUS	34	1542(RR)	24 Oct 44	17 Jul 45	W	25	I				18
WOLVERTON, ARNOLD V	CWO	W2120424	AUS	96	9610	2 Feb 39	12 Mar 45	W	33	V				87



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 BY: S NARA DATE: 10-11-05

PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS

OFFICER:  
 T/O Or Allotted Strength - - - - -22  
 Strength this date - - - - -10  
 Required to bring to T/O or Allotted Strength - -16\*

Military Spec. Ser. Number	Title	Arm or Service	Number Required	Type
0600	Motor Transport	CE	1	1st Lt.
2110	Adjutant S-1	CE	1	1st Lt.
2200	Military Personnel	AUS	2	WO
2900	Company Commander	CE	1	Capt.
4010	Supply S-4	CE	1	Capt.
7914	Surveying Engineer	CE	1	2nd Lt.
7915	Topographic Engineer	CE	1	Capt.
7915	Topographic Engineer	CE	1	2nd Lt.
7915	Topographic Engineer	AUS	1	WO
7915	Photomapping Officer	CE	1	Capt.
7916	Photomapping Officer	CE	3	1st Lt.
7917	Map Reproduction Officer	CE	1	Capt.
7917	Map Reproduction Officer	CE	1	2nd Lt.

\*Officers on DS, not expected to return to Unit.

ENLISTED MEN:  
 T/O or Allotted Strength - - - - -404  
 Strength this date - - - - -286  
 Required to bring to T/O or Allotted Strength 118

Military Spec. Ser. Number	Title	Arm or Service	Number Required	Type
004	Photographer, Aerial	CE	1	T Sgt.
004	Photographer, Aerial	CE	2	Tec 3
004	Photographer, Aerial	CE	10	Tec 4
004	Photographer, Aerial	CE	15	Tec 5
055	Clerk, General	CE	5	Pfc
055	Clerk, Map Distribution	CE	1	Tec 5
055	Clerk, Map Distribution	CE	5	Pfc
055	Map Folder	CE	1	Pfc
055	Map Mounter	CE	1	Pfc
076	Draftsman, Topographical	CE	2	Tec 3
076	Draftsman, Topographical	CE	7	Tec 4

Inclosure #2



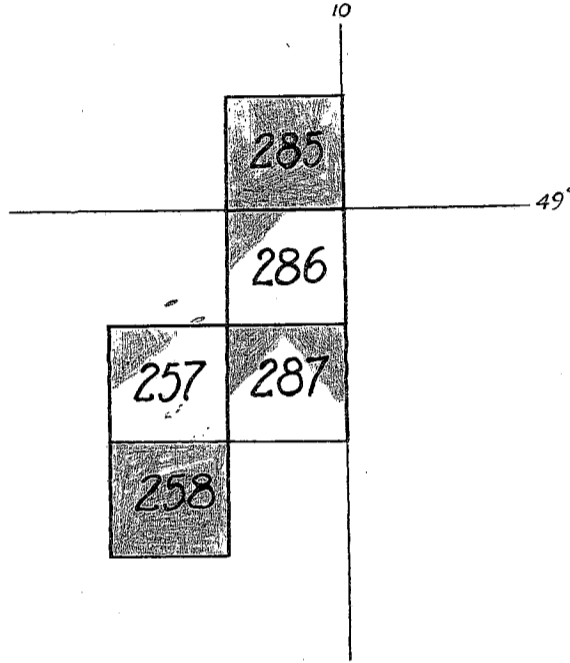
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 AUTHORITY  
 BY: NARA DATE: 10/16/16

Military Spec. Ser. Number	Title	Arm or Service	Number Required	Type
076	Draftsman, Topographical	CE	13	Tec 5
076	Map Editor,	CE	1	Tec 3
076	Map Editor	CE	1	Tec 4
076	Map Editor	CE	3	Tec 5
098	Repairman, Instrument	CE	1	Tec 3
107	Lithographer, Foreman Asst	CE	1	T Sgt
107	Lithographer, Photo Transfer	CE	1	Tec 3
107	Draftsman, Lithographic	CE	1	S Sgt
107	Draftsman, Lithographic	CE	3	Tec 5
167	Erector, Litho Press	CE	1	T Sgt
167	Pressman, Rotary, Litho, Foreman	CE	2	S Sgt
167	Pressman, Rotary, Litho	CE	2	Tec 4
189	Rigger Chief	CE	1	Sgt
189	Rigger, General	CE	1	Pfc
191	Tapeman, Surveying	CE	1	Tec 4
228	Surveyor, Instrument Man	CE	1	Tec 4
228	Surveyor, Instrument Man	CE	2	Tec 5
228	Recorder, Topographic	CE	4	Tec 5
230	Surveyor, Topographic	CE	1	T Sgt
230	Surveyor, Topographic	CE	1	Tec 4
230	Surveyor, Topographic	CE	2	Tec 5
230	Surveyor, Party Chief	CE	2	S Sgt
243	Computer, Topographic	CE	2	Tec 3
243	Computer, Topographic	CE	2	Tec 4
243	Computer, Topographic	CE	2	Tec 5
243	Computer, Topographic	CE	4	Pfc
405	Clerk, Record	CE	3	Pfc
409	Technician, Medical	MD	1	Tec 5
409	Technician, Medical	MD	1	Pfc
673	Medical NCO	MD	1	S Sgt
673	Medical NCO	MD	1	Cpl
835	Clerk, Map Supply Record	CE	1	Tec 5
861	Technician, Surgical	MD	1	Tec 5
861	Technician, Surgical	MD	1	Pvt
945	Technician, Laboratory	CE	1	Tec 4
945	Layout Man	CE	1	Tec 5







Inclosure #2 (Cont'd)

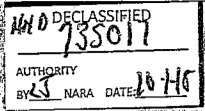
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AUTHORITY
BY: [initials] NARA DATE: 10-7-10

# GSGS 4507



## STATUS

-  DRAFTING STARTED.
-  DRAFTING COMPLETED.
-  EDIT COMPLETED.
-  PROOF STAGE.
-  KODALINES PREPARED.
-  PROGRESS SINCE LAST REPORT.  
(ANY RED SYMBOL.)



HEADQUARTERS  
655th ENGINEER TOPOGRAPHIC BATTALION  
APO 175 U.S. ARMY

2 August 1946

SUBJECT: Report of Mapping Activities

TO : Chief, INF DIV, OCE

1. Submitted herewith is the Report of Mapping Activities for the period ending 31 July 1946.

a. General.

- (1) Visits of Senior Officers: None
- (2) Change in Officer Personnel:
  - (a) 2nd Lt. CHARLES VAN MIDDELEM, asgd this Bn.
  - (b) CWO FRANCIS T. DREHER, asgd this Bn.
  - (c) Capt. JAMES M. RIPLEY, asgd this Bn.
  - (d) The following officer was relieved from assignment and trfd to Hqs Command Separation Center, Wester Base Section for discharge.  
CWO ARNOLD V WOLVERTON

(3) Organization of Unit:

- (a) Officers - see Incl. #1
- (b) Enlisted Men Strength - 315

(4) Personnel Requirements of Unit: See Incl. #2

b. Mapping

- (1) Now Mapping and Revisions.
  - (a) No new mapping was assigned this Unit during the month of July.
  - (b) Project: Revision of 26 Sheets, Bavaria 1:50,000, GSGS 4492. This project is boxed and is being held for additional revision material.
  - (c) Project: GSGS 4507, Germany 1:50,000 has not been completed. For progress on all sheets on Printing Request. Ref. c-5b, dated 13 May 1946 (Your Hqs), with the exception of sheet 258 (which has been completed and delivered to Muhlheim Engr Base Map Depot) refer to Incl. #3
  - (d) Project: GSGS 4414, Germany, 1:25,000:
    - IRP NO. 211 - Drafting and Final Editing has been completed on sheets 6031, 6331, 6333 and are now in reproduction. Sheets 6232, 6332, and 6432 are in Editing Section for Final Edit and will be sent for reproduction within a week.

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HEADQUARTERS  
 655th ENGINEER TOPOGRAPHIC BATTALION  
 APO 175 U.S. ARMY

For progress on all remaining sheets of this project refer to Incl. #4

(c) Project: Berlin Town Plan.  
 This project is being held pending completion of the Technical Training Program.  
 No progress since last report.

(f) Miscellaneous Work. - The Technical Training Program consists of a Student Drafting Course, Instruction in Editing, Stereo-comparagraph Instruction, Computing and Plotting.

- 3,962 man hours have been spent this month in photomapping. These hours include both production and training in photomapping.

(2) Reproduction

(a) Number of Impressions.

Standard maps -----	265,300
Special maps -----	None
Miscellaneous -----	36,500
<b>Total Impressions -----</b>	<b>301,800</b>

c. Aerial Photography: No Comment.

d. Control: No horizontal and vertical control project was assigned this Battalion during the month of July 1946.

e. Supplies: the following items are urgently needed:

- Mercury Vapor tubes - (GE 160H9T1S1 Part No. 9010) for Model "E"
- Ozalid Whiteprint Machine.

- Scotch Tape Red
- Scotch Tape Transparent
- Corn Starch

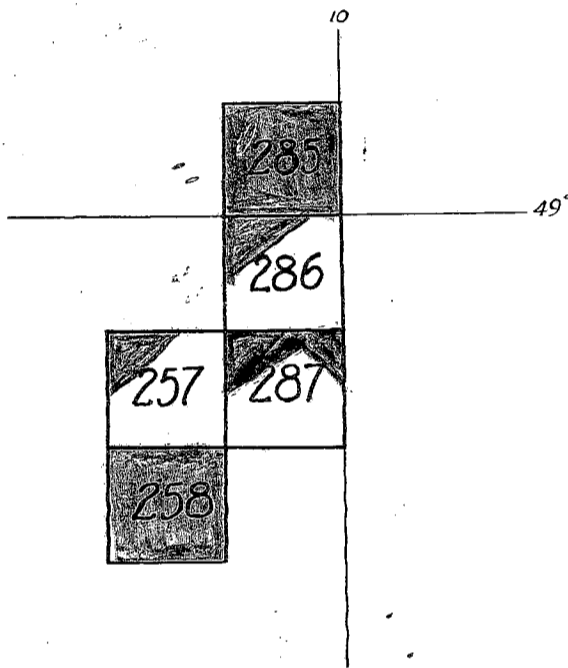
JOHN E UNVERFERTH  
 Lt. Col., CE  
 Commanding.

4 Incls.:







- #1 Organization of Unit - Officers
- #2 Personnel Requirements of Unit
- #3 Progress on GSGS 4507, Germany, 1:50,000
- #4 Progress on GSGS 4414, Germany, 1:25,000

UNCLASSIFIED  
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 AUTHORITY  
 BY SS NARA DATE 10-16-15

# GSGS 4507

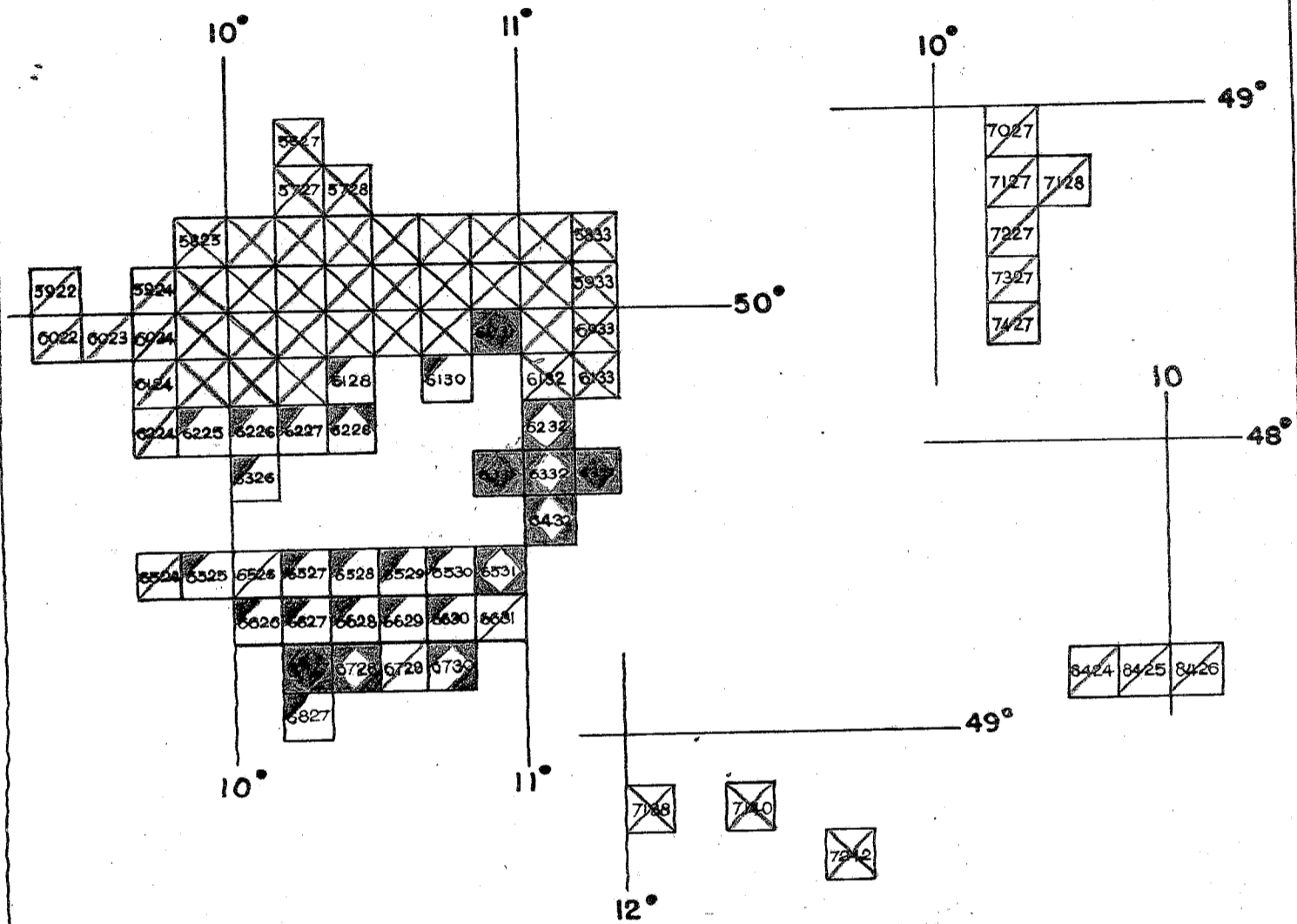


## STATUS

-  DRAFTING STARTED.
-  DRAFTING COMPLETED.
-  EDIT COMPLETED.
-  PROOF STAGE.
-  KODALINES PREPARED.
-  PROGRESS SINCE LAST REPORT.  
(ANY RED SYMBOL.)

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BY: NARA DATE: 10-16

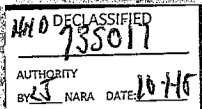
# GSGS 4414



## STATUS

- |  |                       |  |                      |
|--|-----------------------|--|----------------------|
|  | COMPILATION STARTED   |  | PRE-EDIT COMPLETED   |
|  | COMPILATION COMPLETED |  | PROOF STAGE          |
|  | DRAFTING STARTED      |  | FINAL EDIT COMPLETED |
|  | DRAFTING COMPLETED    |  | KODALINES PREPARED   |

(Progress Since Last Report Any Red Symbol)



HEADQUARTERS  
 655th ENGINEER TOPOGRAPHIC BATTALION  
 APO 175 U.S. ARMY

3 September 1946

SUBJECT: Report of Mapping Activities.

TO : Office Theatre Chief Engineer, Military Division

1. Submitted herewith is the Report of Mapping Activities for the period ending 31 August 1946.

a. General.

(1) Visits of Senior Officers:

- (a) Lt. Col. BEANE, Insp Genl Br, 3rd Army
- (b) Major E D CROOKS, OCE, USFET, 16 August 46
- (c) Capt CLARK, Insp Genl Br, 3rd Army

(2) Changes in Officer Personnel

- (a) Capt JAMES M RIPLEY asgd this Bn, and assumed command of Co. B.
- (b) Capt SPENCER D SMITH, asgd this Bn, and assumed command of R&S Co.
- (c) Capt PAUL A BAYORGEON, Capt WILLIAM SCRILLO, Capt CHARLES SACHENMAIER, reld asgmt and asgd to Military Division, Office Theater Chief Engineer.
- (d) Lt. HENRY H COMBS, reld asgmt atch unasgd to Reception Station 10, Fort Sam Houston.
- (e) Lt. HARRY D BAUMAN, TDY since 19 April 46 dropped from the rolls.

(3) Organization of Unit:

- (a) Officers - See atchd list. Incl. # 1
- (b) Enlisted Men Strength - 304

(4) Personnel Requirements of Unit: See atchd personnel requisition. Incl. # 2

b. Mapping Status

- (a) Project GSGS 4414: Final Edit has been completed on Sheets 6232, 6332, and 6432 and sent to B Company for reproduction. Drafting of Sheets 6128, 6130, 6326, 6529, and 6728 have been completed and have been assigned to Editing for Stickup and Proofing. Sheets 6531 and 6228 have been sent out for Proof run. Drafting of Sheets 6525, 6528, 6530, 6227, and 6628 are now in progress.
- (b) Remainder of Projects GSGS 4507, and GSGS 4492, assigned this unit are being held pending completion of Technical Training Program.
- (c) Miscellaneous Work:
  - (1) Miscellaneous charts and plans for units in this area have been made during this month.
  - (2) The Technical Training Program consists of a Student Drafting Course, Instruction in Editing, Stereo-Comparagraph, Computing, and Plotting.
  - (3) 4,741 man hours have been spent this month in photomapping. These hours include both production and training in photomapping.

(Annex B)

UNCLASSIFIED 735017 AUTHORITY BY <u>LS</u> NARA DATE: <u>10-7-10</u>
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c. Reproduction

(a) Number of Impressions	
Standard Maps-----	108,800
Special Maps-----	None
Miscellaneous-----	202,730
Total Impressions	311,530

d. Supplies: The following items are needed.

Mercury Vapor Tubes for Ozalid Machine, Light Bulbs, 220 volts, and 100 watts, Transparent Scotch Tape, Scotch Drafting Tape Pen Points: Hunt No. 102 and 104, Scotch Tape Red and Corn Starch.

JOHN E UNVERFERTH  
Lt. Col., CE  
Commanding

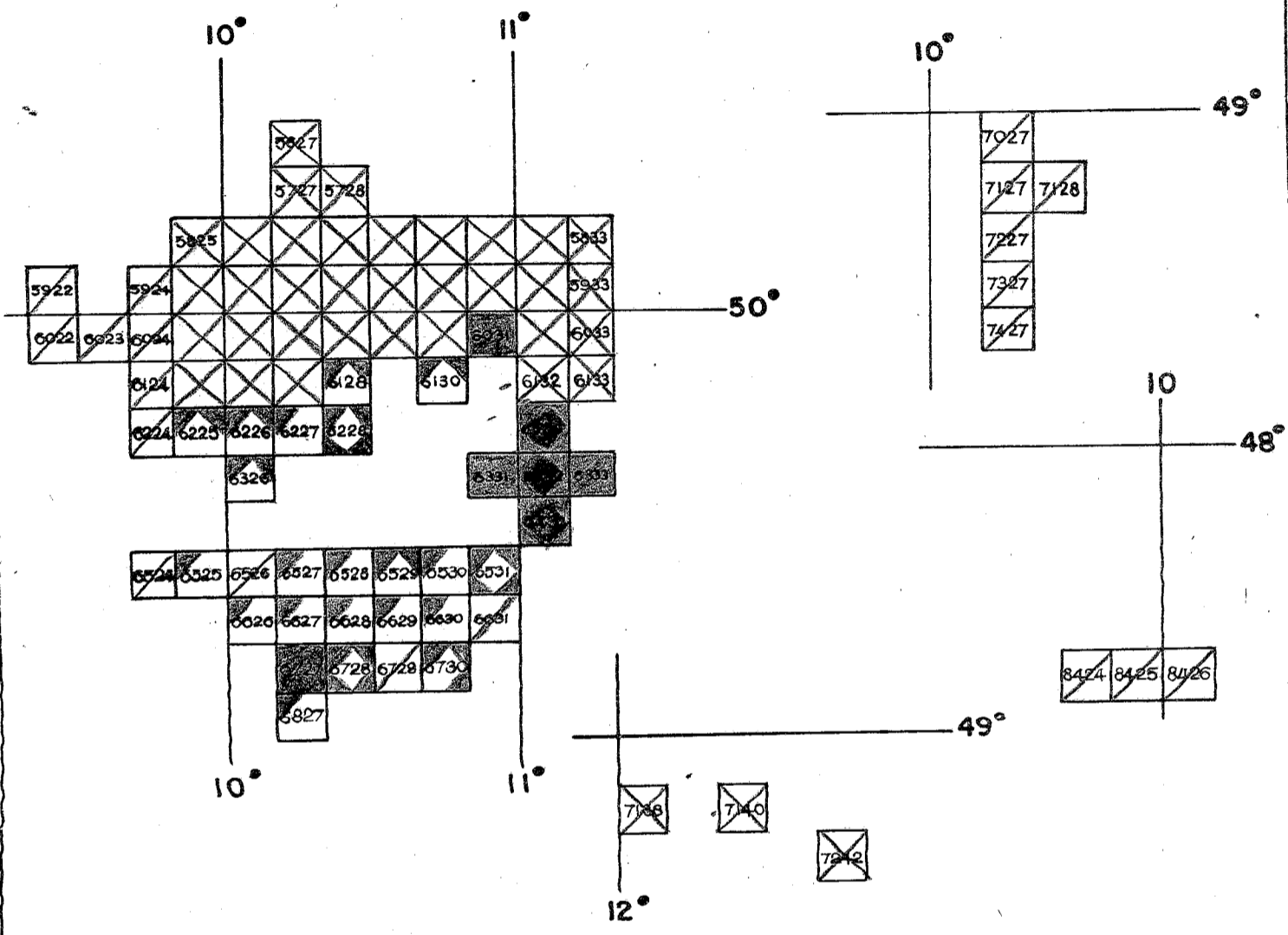
3 Incls.:

- #1 Organization of Unit - Officers
- #2 Personnel Requirements of Unit
- #3 Progress on GSGS 4414, Germany 1:25,000



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BY: [signature] NARA DATE: 10-7-10

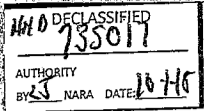
# GSGS 4414



## STATUS

- |  |                       |  |                      |
|--|-----------------------|--|----------------------|
|  | COMPILATION STARTED   |  | PRE-EDIT COMPLETED   |
|  | COMPILATION COMPLETED |  | PROOF STAGE          |
|  | DRAFTING STARTED      |  | FINAL EDIT COMPLETED |
|  | DRAFTING COMPLETED    |  | KODALINES PREPARED   |

(Progress Since Last Report Any Red Symbol)



HEADQUARTERS  
 655th ENGINEER TOPOGRAPHIC BATTALION  
 APO 175 U.S. ARMY

1 October 1946

**SUBJECT:** Report of Mapping Activities.

**TO :** Office Theater Chief Engineer, Military Division

1. Submitted herewith is the Report of Mapping Activities for the period ending 30 September 1946.

**a. General.**

(1) Visits of Senior Officers:

(a) Capt PAUL BAYORGEON, Hqs, USFET, OCE

(2) Changes in Officer Personnel

(a) Lt THOMAS J HUGHES, asgd to Med Detch and assumes command.  
 CWO ALBERT KING, asgd to this Bn and assumes the duties of S-4

Lt RAYMOND J WRIGHT, asgd to this Bn and assumes the duties of Survey Officer.

Lt ANTHONY DEDIER, asgd to this Bn and assumes the duties of Photomapping Officer.

Lt ALBERT S JOHNSON, atchd from other organization, Dental Officer.

(2) Capt WILLIAM M ANDERSON, reld asgt and atchd to third repl depot for redeployment.

Lt GERALD SCHULTE, reld asgmt and trfd to Separation Center No 42, Camp Beale Calif.

**b. Mapping Status**

(a) Project GSGS 4414: Drafting on Blue Line Sheets (Nos. 6527, 6529, 6628, 6528, 6227, and 6630) are now in progress. Sheets 6531, 6228, 6333, 6331, 6432, 6332, and 6232 are in the proof stage.

(b) Miscellaneous Work:

(1) Miscellaneous charts and plans for units in this area have been made during this month.

(2) The Technical Training Program now in progress consists of a Student Drafting Course, Instruction in Editing, Stereo-Comparagraph, Computing, and plotting.

(3) 3,356 man hours have been spent this month in photomapping. These hours include both production and training in photomapping.

(Annex C)

UNCLASSIFIED 735017 AUTHORITY BY <u>SS</u> NARA DATE <u>20 HC</u>
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HEADQUARTERS  
 655th ENGINEER TOPOGRAPHIC BATTALION  
 APO 175 U.S. ARMY

c. Reproduction

(a) Number of Impressions	
Standard Maps	164,400
Special Maps	None
Miscellaneous	<u>34,760</u>
TOTAL	199,160

d. Supplies: The following items of supply are urgently needed.

- Brush, Varnish, Flat Double-X thickness
- Pens, Lettering Speedball, Nos. B5 and B6
- Tape, Scotch Drafting, Manila

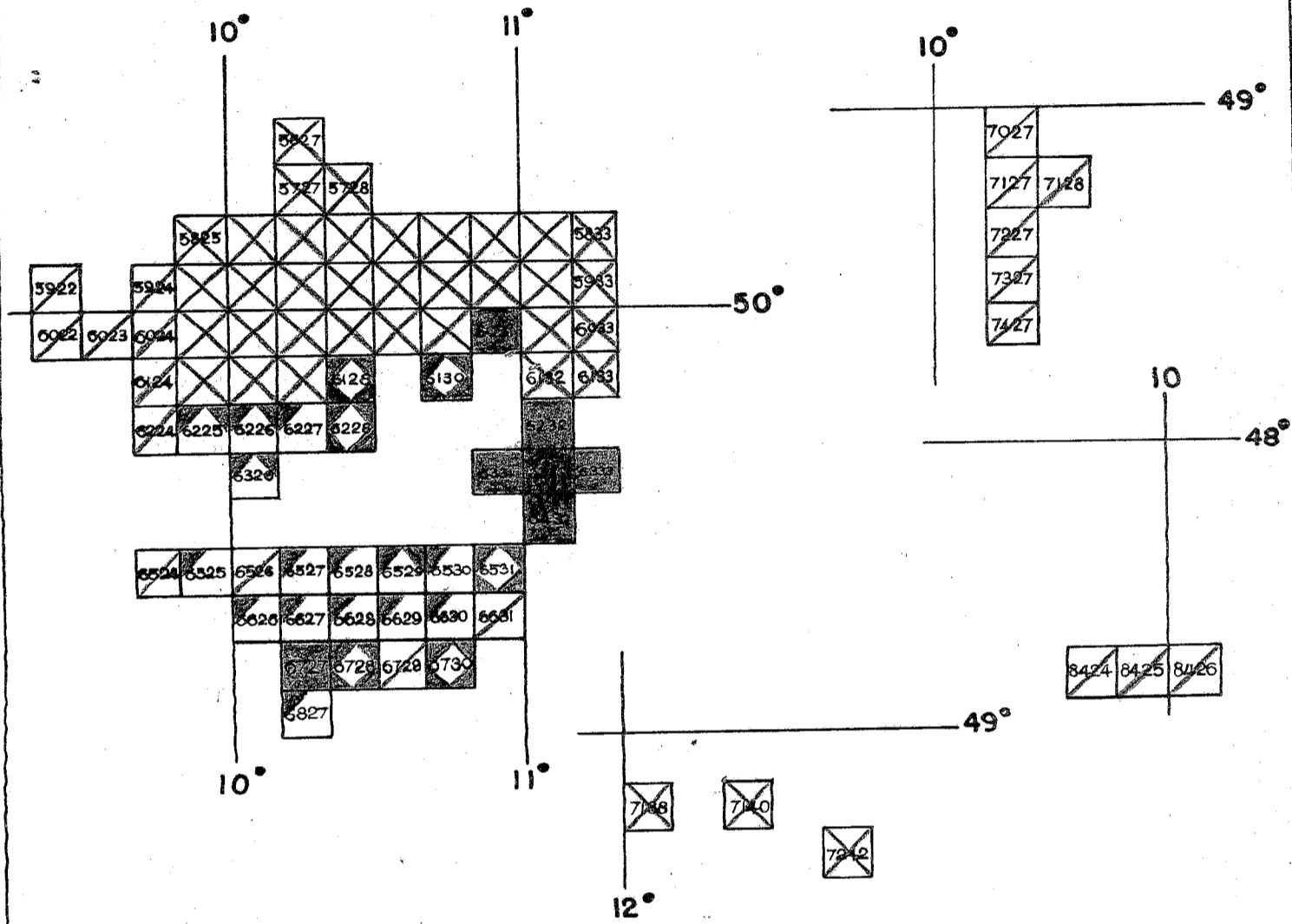
JOHN E UNVERFERTH  
 Lt. Col., CE

3 Incls:

- #1 Organization of Unit - Officers
- #2 Personnel Requirements of Unit
- #3 Progress on CGCS 4414, Germany 1:25,000

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AUTHORITY  
BY: NARA DATE: 10/16/00

# GSGS 4414



## STATUS

- |  |                       |  |                      |
|--|-----------------------|--|----------------------|
|  | COMPILATION STARTED   |  | PRE-EDIT COMPLETED   |
|  | COMPILATION COMPLETED |  | PROOF STAGE          |
|  | DRAFTING STARTED      |  | FINAL EDIT COMPLETED |
|  | DRAFTING COMPLETED    |  | KODALINES PREPARED   |

(Progress Since Last Report Any Red Symbol)