

Th Combat Engineer Battalion Officers And Nco S 1973 77

This thesis focuses on a construction unit in the United States Army, the Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Heavy). The Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Heavy) is the organization providing the U.S. Army the bulk of its heavy construction capability. The author examines the organization and capabilities of the battalion and determines if the U.S. Army should make changes to the battalion organizational structure to make it a more effective combat multiplier for full spectrum operations in the 21st century. The concept of modularity is defined from doctrinal sources and an assessment is made to determine if the battalion configurations affords the flexibility required to achieve this. There is a tendency to look to civilian models, which generally have functionalized companies, when recommending changes to military construction organizations. This monograph examines the differences between operating environments of civilian construction firms and military construction units and assesses how this might impact the organizational design of a U.S. Army troop construction organization. The author briefly covers the history, employment and reasoning for the present organization of the battalion. Case studies of the use of combat heavy engineer battalions in Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm (1990-1991), and operations in Bosnia (1995-2000) are examined to determine the battalion's overall effectiveness in providing general engineering support to these operations. These case studies provides a basis for examining the use of the battalions in Major Theater War (MTW) operations of short duration in a relatively mature theater, and Stability and Support Operations (SASO) of long duration in an immature and battle damaged theater. Additionally, the present organizational structure of the troop heavy construction organizations

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in the U.S. Navy and the U.S. The author determined that overall, the present
In what quickly came to be called the Battle of the Bulge, the 291st Engineer Combat Battalion found itself directly in the path of the German spearhead. With heart-stopping suspense, Colonel David Pergrin describes one of the European theater's critical delaying actions as his unit destroyed bridges, planted mines, and defended roadblocks in the face of oncoming tank columns. Here, in gritty detail, is the story of how "those damned Engineers" ruined Hitler's winter offensive, and how the 291st, with a reputation almost as big as its accomplishments, went on to build a 1100-foot pontoon bridge across the Rhine at Remagen in 32 hours-in the face of fierce opposition and near-impossible odds. Pergrin follows the battalion from its formation and training through the campaigns in France, Belgium, and Germany, making us witness the genuine heroics, skill, and spirit that lifted the 291st to the realm of legend.

"Perchance I suffer only mildly from claustrophobia but when I learned of the horrors and scarcely imaginable dangers of the tunnels of Ku Chi under the Iron Triangle of Vietnam all those years back, I was one big goosebump. Then I met and talked with Tunnel Rat Six, aka Jack Flowers. Now he has written his memoir, telling us the way it was. So if you are prepared to be really frightened (by proxy) read it." -Frederick Forsyth "Jack Flowers has distilled his harrowing experience of war into a story of stark realism, authenticity and psychological insight. His narrator, Cliff Price, volunteers (as did the author) for, in his words, "perhaps the worst job in Vietnam". Only a few men could handle the terrors of fighting the Viet Cong in their tunnels, and we are forced to appreciate the exceptional courage and steadiness a 'tunnel rat' needed. Price's squad's underground encounters with the enemy have the ring of truth. But what also marks this novel is its humanity: a conscientious young officer, negotiating with

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his seniors, working with an intimidating sergeant, and always fearful for the lives of the men he led.” -John Penycate, co-author of *The Tunnels of Cu Chi*.

At its peak in World War II, the United States Army contained over 700 engineer battalions, along with numerous independent brigades and regiments. The specialized soldiers of the Engineers were tasked with a wide variety of crucially important tasks including river bridging, camouflage, airfield construction, and water and petroleum supply. However, despite their important support roles, the engineers were often employed on the front lines fighting beside the general infantry in the desperate battles of the European theatre. This book covers the role of these soldiers, from their recruitment and training, through their various support missions and combat experiences, forming an account of what it was truly like to be a combat engineer in World War II.

The Ninety-Eighth Engineer (General Service) Regiment, African American, embarked for North Africa in February 1943 and landed at Algeria. The regiment became nomadic and split up its battalions and companies to work in different locations, including port stewards, road construction, and clearing mines in the Kasserine Pass. All the while, they were moving forward with the combat units until they reached Tunisia. In December 1943, the Ninety-Eighth loaded aboard amphibious vehicle landing ships and sailed to Naples, Italy. As in North Africa, upon arrival, the regiment was split up and sent to different locations. It began work on the ports, roads, railroads, and reconstruction of buildings, minesweeping, and bridges. It moved up the coast of Italy, ensuring that the roads and bridges could hold armor and other vehicles as combat units advanced up the boot. Eventually, the regiment reunited in Leghorn, Italy, where it added another battalion and worked in Pisa, Florence, and surrounding areas until

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September 1945.

NOTE: NO FURTHER DISCOUNT FOR THIS PRINTED PRODUCT- OVERSTOCK SALE --

Significantly reduced list price *Engineers at War* describes the role of military engineers, especially the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in the Vietnam War. It is a story of the engineers' battle against an elusive and determined enemy in one of the harshest underdeveloped regions of the world. Despite these challenges, engineer soldiers successfully carried out their combat and construction missions. The building effort in South Vietnam allowed the United States to deploy and operate a modern 500,000-man force in a far-off region. Although the engineers faced huge construction tasks, they were always ready to support the combat troops. They built ports and depots, carved airfields and airstrips out of jungle and mountain plateaus, repaired roads and bridges, and constructed bases. Because of these efforts, ground combat troops with their supporting engineers were able to fight the enemy from well-established bases. Although most of the construction was temporary, more durable facilities, such as airfields, port and depot complexes, headquarters buildings, communications facilities, and an improved highway system, were intended to serve as economic assets for South Vietnam. This volume covers how the engineers grew from a few advisory detachments to a force of more than 10 percent of the Army troops serving in South Vietnam. The 35th Engineer Group began arriving in large numbers in June 1965 to begin transforming Cam Ranh Bay into a major port, airfield, and depot complex. Within a few years, the Army engineers had expanded to a command, two brigades, six groups, twenty-eight construction and combat battalions, and many smaller units. Other products produced by the U.S. Army, Center of Military History can be found here: <https://bookstore.gpo.gov/agency/1061>

What is prayer? If you ask just about anyone, they will most likely say it is how we talk to God. And you know what? They'd be right! This book will not only tell you how to pray, but also what to expect when that prayer is answered.

In the summer of 1969, young American men were called upon to go to Vietnam and to fight and die in a war that no one cared about any more. I was a first-hand witness to this. I had a wide range of experience in that conflict, and I saw "the good, the bad, and the ugly." My service included duty as an engineer with the paratroopers, a company commander with a construction battalion, a liaison officer for a Playboy Bunny, and a reconnaissance officer on the Cambodian border. The heart of my narrative is a road construction project in Viet Cong territory, but my service carried me all across South Vietnam and out to sea with the Navy on Yankee Station. What I saw was the demoralization of an army and the end of an era. What I experienced was my Rite of Passage.

Engineers, the Dynamic Corps
The Engineer

This Research Product, prepared for the Deputy Commanding General for Training, U.S. Army Combined Arms Command, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, presents information for the maneuver battalion commander and staff to consider. It provides information to determine staff functional capability, assess staff actions, and provide fundamental references for inexperienced staff officers.

It describes the core duties of battalion staff officers and key slice liaison officers on the battle staff. Feedback from field commanders, combat training center (CTC) observations, and research conducted by the Training Systems Research Division of the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences supports the need for staff training at the battalion level. The results of this effort have been published in ARI Research Report 1607 (December 1991) Battle Staff Training and Synchronization in Light Infantry Battalions and Task Forces. Current officer training programs do not systematically provide necessary functional area skills. The Commander's Battle Staff Handbook serves as an interim tool to meet this critical requirement. The handbook is a reference document, not a complete training program. It can serve as the battalion commander's guide to staff functional duties in combat preparation. It can also be used to give the battalion's new staff officers a starting point to learn their own garrison responsibilities since functional area references are provided. This handbook cannot replace functional area skills training and the valuable experience acquired during staff and field exercises. It can, however, be the supportive first step for the enthusiastic staff officer who lacks initial knowledge and comprehension about his duties.

PREFACE * INTRODUCTION * To The
Commander * To The Commander and Staff * Purpose * Organization * Level of

Detail * Checklists * XO * CSM * S1 * S2/BICC * S3/S3 * Air * S4/BMO * Fire Support Officer * Engineer * Air Defense Artillery * Signal * Chemical * Chaplain

The material in the Commander's Battle Staff Handbook was prepared through reviews of relevant staff materials provided by TRADOC branch schools, interviews with subject matter experts, and from the assessment of unit operations from the combat training centers. You have learned to synchronize your combat power during your experience at Fort Leavenworth, at the Tactical Commander's Development Course, and you have come to realize that you will have staff officers with a wide variety of experience, but not necessarily any that prepares them to fill their staff specific assignments. The purpose of the Commander's Battle Staff Handbook is to give you a tool to help you lead, train, and use your staff more effectively. This handbook is, at best, an introduction to staff functional skills. It can never replace formal functional area training, but it will get you and your staff officers started. The information contained in the handbook will provide you and your staff with what they and supporting officers from the brigade slice should know to begin functioning as a team.

In 1927, Major General Commandant John A. Lejeune published a paper describing his beliefs regarding the role of engineers in the Marine Corps. He envisioned a service organization whose capabilities spanned the broad

spectrum from performing military engineering as a member of a Marine Division in an amphibious assault operation to making cabinets for the garrison posts. As the remainder of the combat arms communities evolves, incorporating more modern weapon systems and rapid, highly dispersed maneuver tactics, the disparity between engineers and the infantry they support in terms of combined arms employment is increasing. Therefore, the Marine Corps should provide each combat engineer battalion with a Marine Corps infantry weapons officer, or "gunner," MOS 0306.

"Engineers at War describes the role of military engineers, especially the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in the Vietnam War. It is a story of the engineers battle against an elusive and determined enemy in one of the harshest underdeveloped regions of the world. Despite these challenges, engineer soldiers successfully carried out their combat and construction missions. The building effort in South Vietnam allowed the United States to deploy and operate a modern 500,000-man force in a far-off region. Although the engineers faced huge construction tasks, they were always ready to support the combat troops. They built ports and depots, carved airfields and airstrips out of jungle and mountain plateaus, repaired roads and bridges, and constructed bases. Because of these efforts, ground combat troops with their supporting engineers were able to fight the

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George Patton is renowned for his daring tank thrusts and rapid movement, but the many rivers and obstacles his Third Army encountered crossing Europe required engineers spearheading his advance. A Combat Engineer with Patton's Army is the untold story of Frank Lembo, one of Patton's men who helped move the American command in the battle of Argentan in the Normandy Campaign, in the high-speed pursuit of the German Wehrmacht eastward across France, and in the brutal battles waged during the Battle of the Bulge and during the final combats along the borders of the collapsing Reich. Throughout his time in Europe Lembo maintained a running

commentary of his experiences with Betty Craig, his fiancé and future wife. This extensive correspondence provides a unique eyewitness view of the life and work of a combat engineer under wartime conditions. As a squad (and later platoon) leader, Frank and his comrades cleared mines, conducted reconnaissance behind enemy lines, built bridges, and performed other tasks necessary to support the movement of the 317th, 318th, and 319th Infantry Regiments of the Blue Ridge Division—Patton’s workhorses, if not his glamour boys. Frank wrote about the deadly river crossings at the Moselle, Seille, and Sauer, all under enemy fire, and of the frustrating pauses when supplies were diverted. He participated in the mid-December sprint to Luxembourg and the relief provided at Bastogne during the Bulge, the liberation of concentration camps once Third Army had charged into Germany, and of their occupation duty in Bavaria. Frank’s letters go beyond his direct combat experiences to include the camaraderie among the GIs, living conditions, weather, and the hijinks that helped keep the constant threat of death at bay. His letters also worked to reassure Betty with hopeful dreams for their future together. Including dozens of previously unpublished photographs, *A Combat Engineer with Patton’s Army: The Fight Across Europe with the 80th “Blue Ridge” Division in World War II* offers the rare perspective of what day-to-day warfare at the ground-level looked like in the European Theater through the eyes of one of the men spearheading the advance.

[This edition benefits from numerous maps of the battlefields that the actions were

fought over] “NUTS!” - Among the many military legends that abound from the fighting of the Second World War, the one word reply to a German summons to surrender must rank highly in terms of its resonance, importance and sheer grit. General Mcaulliffe decided that despite the odds and the lack of supplies and ammunition his troops would continue to hold the important communication hub of Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge. This dramatic, yet authoritative account brings all of the action to the fore as the Battered Bastards of Bastogne wrote their names into legend. "THIS STORY OF BASTOGNE was written from interviews with nearly all the commanders and staff officers and many of the men who participated in the defense of Bastogne during the first phase of that now celebrated operation—the days during which the American forces were surrounded by forces of the enemy... Thus it is essentially the account of how a single strong defensive force was built from separate commands of armor, airborne infantry and tank destroyers—a force convinced that it could not be beaten."-Introduction.

Captain Jim Decker returns for his second tour in Vietnam. With all his engineer experience in construction units, he is surprised to be assigned to a combat engineer battalion. And surprise almost turns to shock as he learns that he will command a company detached from its battalion and under the operational control of the 122nd Separate Infantry Brigade (Airborne). Upon arriving at the brigade's basecamp, he learns that his company has been relegated to base support work such as repairing

perimeter bunkers, improving the helipad, and expanding the ammunition supply point. Shortly after arrival he sees that the brigade could use his unit's support in its combat operations. But there are problems: How can he get his noncommissioned officers' support for changing the company's operations from work in a relatively secure area where almost all of the soldiers will successfully complete their Vietnam tour, to combat engineer support in the jungle with its very real risk of injury and death? How can he get his soldiers trained up for these jungle operations? How will he get the brigade to ever trust his "leg" engineers to support its airborne soldiers? If this is to work at all a great number of challenges must be overcome, to include training for jungle survival, for proficiency in individual and crew-served weapons, for skills in booby trap identification and avoidance, for expertise in setting out trip flares and Claymore mines, and for constructing hasty field fortifications. However, nothing seems to work and the brigade appears determined to ignore Decker and his combat engineer company . . . until it finds itself in the fight of its life. Will Decker's efforts pay off? Maybe and maybe not. The fruition of months of hard training and the exciting ending are highlighted in the fight of Operation Valley Fury."

The combat engineers of the First Marine Division, 9th Engineer Battalion, risked their lives daily in Vietnam as they cleared the roads of mines, repaired and paved the famous Highway 1, disarmed booby traps, built bridges and culverts, and destroyed enemy bunkers and tunnels. Despite their sacrifices and pain, the combat engineers in

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Vietnam have heretofore largely been ignored. This is the first oral (or other) history of the 9th Engineers, the only Marine battalion formed specifically to go to Vietnam. More than 35 men of the 9th talk about why they joined the Marines and their experiences in basic training. They speak candidly and compellingly about their five years (1966 to 1970) in country. The soldiers also discuss what it was like to come home and get on with their lives.

In Guadalcanal Marine, Kerry L. Lane recounts the dark reality of combat experienced by the men of the 1st Marine Division fighting on Guadalcanal and Cape Gloucester. With eighty gripping photographs and his text, he brings to life the struggles of his companions as they achieve these two astonishing victories. Lane, a sixteen-year-old farm boy from North Carolina, battled the Japanese and rose to heroism powering a bulldozer to bridge "Suicide Creek" in the swamps on Cape Gloucester. There he led his Marine comrades to victory. Lane describes the trials of the common Marine serving in the first grueling island campaign. In vivid prose he tells of joining the service before the war and of training. Soon after the shocking news of Pearl Harbor, he and his trusted comrades fight the Japanese in one of the bloodiest battles of the Pacific. In the tropics, Lane and his companions suffer malaria and dysentery, endure jungle rot and oppressive heat, and grapple with an enemy who fights to the death. Throughout the book, Lane bares the experience of the average Marine and his historic World War II journey, revealing how one teenager became a Corps hero and ultimately finished his

military career as a lieutenant colonel.

Victory eluded the United States in Korea. To achieve it would have taken a commander with far less hubris than General of the Army Douglas MacArthur. With the war barely four months old, the North Korean Peoples Army (NKPA) is everywhere in retreat. Their invasion of South Korea has turned into a disaster. The United States Eighth Army is in hot pursuit. Their intent is to destroy the NKPA. Suddenly, a quarter million troops of the Chinese Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) erupt out of the mountains of North Korea. In less than a month, Eighth Army has been routed and flees into South Korea. It is the worst defeat in American military history. What happened and why is told in this novel *The Court-Martial of Douglas MacArthur*. The author is a graduate of the Infantry School (OCS), the Airborne School, the Advanced Engineer Course and the Command and General Staff College. He retired as a battalion commander of combat engineers.

Originally published in 1946, this book is an official unit history for the 2d Armored Division in World War II, which was activated on 15 July 1940 and participated in campaigns in Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace, Central Europe, and Sicily. Elements of the Division first saw action in North Africa, landing at Casablanca in November 1942, and later took part in the fighting at Beja, Tunisia, but as a whole did not enter combat until the invasion of Sicily, when it made an assault landing at Gela in July 1943 and saw action at

Butera, Campobello, and Palermo. After the Sicilian campaign, the Division trained in England for the cross-Channel invasion, landed in Normandy D plus 3 on 9 June 1944, and went into action in the vicinity of Carentan. The Division raced across France in July and August, drove through Belgium, and attacked across the Albert Canal in September, crossing the German border at Schimmert to take up defensive positions near Geilenkirchen. In October, it launched an attack on the Siegfried Line from Marienberg, broke through, crossed the Wurm River, and seized Puffendorf and Barmen in November. It was holding positions on the Roer when it was ordered to help contain the German Ardennes offensive. The Division helped reduce the Bulge in January 1945, fighting in the Ardennes forest in deep snow, and cleared the area from Houffalize to the Ourthe River of the enemy. After a rest in February, the Division drove on across the Rhine in March, and was the first American Division to reach the Elbe at Schonebeck in April, where it was halted, on orders. In July 1945, the Division entered Berlin—the first American unit to enter the German capital city. Known as the "Hell on Wheels" division, the 2d Armored Division was one of the most famous American units in World War II. Richly illustrated throughout with photos of the 2d Armored Division, General George Patton, battle photographs and maps.

“The most rigorous service which a soldier is called upon to perform is the duty

of a ground combat soldier. He is the man who must wade in the mud, endure heat and cold, and sleep on the ground. That is the toughest kind of service.' These words, spoken from the floor of the United States Senate on April 19th, 1945 reflect the sincere feeling of the American people toward the Queen of Battles. "Through the medium of TIMBERWOLF TRACKS, it is our intention to present an honest commentary on the fighting in Europe incurred by the U.S. Infantryman...specifically the ground combat soldier who wore the green and silver patch of the Timberwolf. His lot was not a glamorous one; he fought, ate, slept in mud, snow and hail; his battle-weary body answered the call to move up time and time again while his tortured mind heroically withstood the numbing shock of having time-honored buddies fall by the wayside. His moments of praise were fleeting and none too consoling—still he wore the blue and silver Combat Infantryman Badge with an intense burning pride and he gloried in the record and achievements of his 'outfit.' His was the supreme satisfaction of a job well done. "The 104th Infantry Division did not win the war. We make no such far-reaching claim...but the Timberwolves did play a most effective role in crushing the iron fist of Nazidom. The record, compiled by the men of this fighting division, is in the words of the Commanding General 'second to none'. It is appropriate that such a record be preserved. In the following pages, Americans may find a justifiable

gratefulness that such men as these stood so valorously between them and slavery.”

In July 2006, Martin Hunt was a successful software sales professional with a wife, two sons, a happy life in Seattle, and a commitment to the U.S. Army that he was not sure he'd ever be called on to fulfill. A year later he was a resident of Camp Ramadi, a dusty outpost at the epicenter of Operation Iraqi Freedom. A senior officer surrounded by young men charged with the highly dangerous task of clearing improvised explosive devices from supply routes, Hunt soon grew to dread the call “River City” — the code for incoming casualties. Trapped between his “real” life in Seattle, visited through Skype and a furlough that seemed over before it began, and the hell of “River City,” Hunt provides a window into the paradigm-shifting experience of deployment in the War on Terror: a story of faith, love, and life, interrupted.

Presents professional information designed to keep Army engineers informed of current and emerging developments within their areas of expertise for the purpose of enhancing their professional development. Articles cover engineer training, doctrine, operations, strategy, equipment, history, and other areas of interest to the engineering community.

Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0, Unified Land Operations, is

the first ADRP released under Doctrine 2015. ADRP 3-0 expands on the foundations and tenets found in Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 3-0. This ADRP expands on the doctrine of unified land operations found in ADP 3-0. The publication of ADP 3-0 shifted the Army's operational concept from full spectrum operations to unified land operations. The doctrine of unified land operations describes how the Army demonstrates its core competencies of combined arm maneuver and wide area security through decisive action. The term decisive action replaces the term full spectrum operations as the concept of continuous, simultaneous offense, defense, stability, or defense support of civil authorities. Defense support of civil authorities replaces civil support as a task under decisive action. ADRP 3-0 expands the discussion of the foundations and tenets of unified land operations, as well as the operational framework found in ADP 3-0. Additional changes in ADRP 3-0 from the now obsolete 2011 FM 3-0, Change 1, includes a discussion of the range of military operations replacing the spectrum of conflict as well as a discussion of information collection replacing intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance (known as ISR). These changes in ADRP 3-0 now better align Army doctrine with the joint discussion of the principles of joint operations. ADRP 3-0 remains generally consistent with the now obsolete 2011 FM 3-0, Change 1, on key topics while adopting updated terminology and

concepts as necessary. These topics include the discussion of an operational environment and the operational and mission variables, as well as the discussions of unified action, law of land warfare, and combat power. As in the now obsolete 2011, FM 3-0, Change 1, mission command remains both a philosophy of command and a warfighting function. Finally, ADRP 3-0 maintains combined arms as the application of arms that multiplies Army forces' effectiveness in all operations. ADRP 3-0 contains four chapters: Chapter 1 shortens the discussion of the operational environment found on the now obsolete 2011 FM 3-0, Change 1, and emphasizes military operations. This chapter provides a framework of variables of an operational environment that shape their nature and affect outcomes. The chapter then discusses unified action and joint operations as well as land operations. Finally, this chapter discusses law of land warfare and combined arms. Chapter 2 introduces the Army's new operational concept of unified land operations. It discusses how commanders apply landpower as part of unified action to defeat the enemy on land and establish conditions that achieve the joint force commander's end state. Chapter 2 discusses how commanders demonstrate the Army's new core competencies of combined arms maneuver and wide area security conducted through decisive action. Chapter 3 discusses combat power and the warfighting

functions used to generate combat power in support of unified land operations. As in the now obsolete 2011 FM 3-0, Change 1, chapter 3 discusses the eight elements of combat power that include the six warfighting functions with leadership and information. Lastly, it discusses how Army forces achieve combined arms through force tailoring, task organization, and mutual support. Chapter 4 discusses the elements of operational art and the meaning of operational art to Army forces. It elaborates on commanders and staffs applying the elements of operational art to understand, visualize, and describe how to establish conditions to achieve a desired end state. It discusses how operational art represents a creative approach to dealing with the direction of military forces and expresses an informed vision across the levels of war.

In April 2003, Major Wayne Sodowsky deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as the assistant operations officer of the 70th Engineer Battalion, part of 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division - a mechanized combat engineer unit. After doing a relief in place with 3rd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, his brigade took over battlespace in northwest Baghdad. "When it became apparent that reconstruction was going to be the major mission," Sodowsky explained, "I became the battalion civil-military operations (CMO) officer. Within the division there were these Task Force Neighborhood projects and I became the point man

on that for the battalion. Since we were co-located with the brigade, I got plugged in there and was fairly involved in that," dealing with transformer substations, water treatment plants and the like. Sodowsky also talks about working with a North Dakota National Guard company that could "build anything," the Task Force Fajr folks from the US Army Corps of Engineers, and his battalion commander who could speak Arabic and was, thus, hugely popular among the local residents. In addition, he tells how the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA) at some point suddenly put a stop to all projects their division was doing and the resulting second- and third-order problems that order caused. "Balancing what we could do and what the local populace wanted" was a principal challenge throughout his deployment, as was the transition from combat engineering tasks to those associated with stability and support operations. Sodowsky closes with recommendations on how this gap could be more easily bridged and also describes his encounter with a reporter who was only interested in details about a recent casualty event, not in any of the positive reconstruction projects they were doing.

These words may seem to have been written by an advance infantry unit or a combat brigade, carrying out an assault against entrenched enemy troops. Instead, this hair-raising narrative comes from the diary of "B" Company of the

1303rd Engineer General Service Regiment, a “non-combat” unit attached to Patton’s Third Army during his epic pursuit of the retreating German forces across France during August, 1944. Though the 1303rd (called “the thirteen-third” by its soldiers) was supposed to perform its duties outside the zone of armed conflict, these men found themselves acting as the southern flank of Patton’s rapid advance. More than once, they had to re-build bridges the Germans had hastily destroyed in order to permit the continued advance of American troops—often doing so under enemy fire. Twice they were called upon to deploy as infantry in holding back German attacks. Careful editing and annotation by military historian Joseph C. Fitzharris corrects occasional lapses in the diary, clarifies references, and provides important context for following the movements and understanding the importance of Company B, the 1303rd, and its sister regiments. Patton’s Fighting Bridge Builders rewards its readers with a new understanding of both the messiness and the bravery of the Second World War.

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