ST. AIGNAN MECCA FOR PURSUERS OF THE RED CHEVRON

Coveted Symbol Awarded After Brief Stay in Discharge Camp

MUST GET CONTRACT FIRST

For All Except Men Who Enlisted Here Evidence of Having Job Is Necessary

Two months ago a man dressed in the uniform of the United States Army and wearing a red chevron on his left sleeve, denoting he had received his discharge in France, was a novelty. Today hundreds of men are proudly exhibiting their red chevrons while the discharge camp at St. Aignan is laboring day and night to handle the applicants arriving on every train.

With few exceptions the men being discharged in France have already signed up with the American Red Cross, the Y.M.C.A., Jewish Welfare Board, Salvation Army, Hoover Food Commission or other organizations for further service in Europe. The exceptions are those men who joined the Army in France and are being discharged here instead of returning to the United States.

Because a number of men who had intended joining one or another of the relief organizations went astray and fell back on the hands of the Army authorities minus their bankrolls, it is now compulsory that all men applying for discharge, unless they joined in France, have contracts with their organization before they can receive their discharge papers.

All Trains Are Met

Men attached to the classification and discharge camps meet all trains at St. Aignan and escort the incoming soldiers to one of the two. Soldiers returning to the United States are sent to the classification camp, while those being discharged in France now go direct to the discharge camp, located a kilometer from the main camp, and between the station and St. Aignan. Up to last week all men were sent to the classification camp where they were deloused and their clothing sterilized. Now, however, they are taken to the discharge camp direct.

All records must be complete before men are discharged. Those arriving sans service records are held until they come. Few service records are complete in all details, but those lacking can usually be supplied by the men themselves. Several men who are veterans of several weeks at the discharge camp are still there because their records went astray or are incomplete.

The time necessary for securing a discharge varies. A few weeks ago it required two or three days at the most. Last Friday approximately 100 men were discharged who had been at St. Aignan for periods varying from four days to 14. Those held up the longest had been waiting action by the paymaster who would not pay railroad mileage until receipt of proper authority, which arrived Friday.

Beaucoup Francs Paid Men

Men discharged in France receive 5 cents a mile railroad fare from St. Aignan to Brest and from Hoboken to the place where they enlisted in the United States. In addition to this each man receives a bonus of $60 and his pay according to rank from date of last payday. Enlisted men residing in California or other western states receive approximately 1,500 francs, including bonus and mileage. The westerners have the bulge on New Yorkers, who draw $18 railroad fare from St. Aignan to Brest and a jitney street car fare from Hoboken to their homes.

Sea travel at the expense of the United States Army is waived by all men being discharged in France. The organizations employing these men certify to the Army that they will be responsible for this.

Men who enlisted in Paris or other cities in Europe receive railroad mileage to the point of enlistment, providing they are being discharged over here. Otherwise Uncle Sam pays their way to their homes in the United States. Each man is permitted to keep one complete uniform, an overcoat or mackinaw, his gas mask and helmet, two suits of underwear and two pairs of socks.

Last Days Spent Loafing

For the majority of the men awaiting discharge the last few days in the Army are spent loafing. From the men occupying the three discharge barracks are selected a dozen each day for K.P. and a half dozen more for policing up. It is a sight for sore eyes for a private to gaze on a fatigue detail made up entirely of noncoms, ranging from top sergeants to corporals, shooting the festive snipes and gathering up pieces of paper and trash about the grounds, under the direction of the top cutter of the camp.

The others idle about barracks waiting to be called for interview relative to the information on their service records to sign the payroll or for physical examination, all of which have to be gone through with before the francs are paid out and the discharge is placed in their hands.

Queer Antics Follow

Fortunately there is no nut specialist stationed at the discharge camp or it is likely he would have the discharged men detained even though they have their honorable discharges in their hands. As the men step from the office, many go through some queer antics. One will be down on his knees, his discharge spread out on the ground, the better to kiss it. Another will hug the treasured paper to his heart and dash through the crowd, straight for the gate and the freedom of the world.

4TH GOLD CHEVRON IS NOW AMONGST US

And Only Four in A. E. F. Dare to Break It Out Yet-a-While

It has appeared among us—that fourth service stripe. There are thousands of ones and twos and threes, but that foruth one sticks out like a beacon in a fog, and sets everyone to wondering if the wearer didn't make a mistake and tack it on the wrong arm.

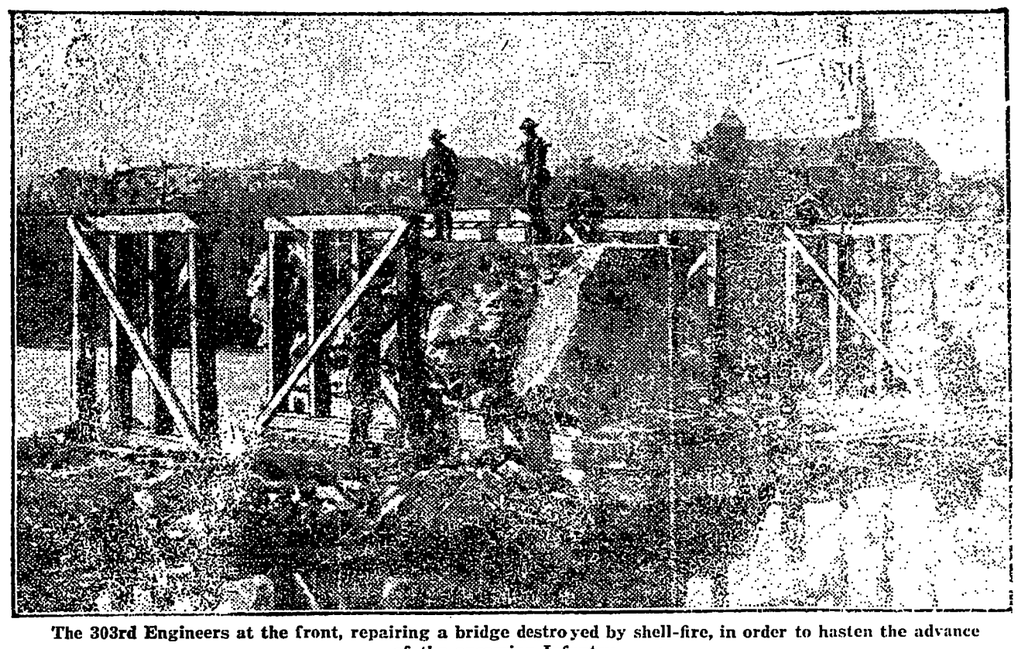
There are just four men, as far as is known, now in France who have gained the right to stick that extra gold V on their left sleeve. Col. C. W. Exton, Paris representative of the Army Educational Commission, is one. The colonel was military attaché in Switzerland when the United States declared that a state of war existed between it and Germany. Being overseas when the war began, and coming thus within the pale of the regulation prescribing the right to wear the gold stripe, his six-month period began to run coincidentally with our participation in the conflict.

Others who were overseas at the same time were Brig. Gen. Frank Parker, now with the 1st Division, at that time an observer over here; and Col. Sanford Wadhams, U.S.M.C., A.E.F., another American soldier who was in France in April 1917.

Incidentally, four-stripes will begin to appear on others very soon, for May 1917, saw several American hospital units landing in France. Most of these Yanks have sailed for home, but a goodly number is left.

However, that fourth golden V will be rare enough to subject its owner to narrow scrutiny and, mayhap a question or so.

ENGINEERS CLEARING PATH FOR DOUGHBOYS



The 303rd Engineers at the front, repairing a bridge destroyed by shell-fire, in order to hasten the advance of the oncoming Infantry.

Continued from Page 1

as devoid of color as the lives of the simple peasants who inhabit that region."

Many are there who have seen the fighters land and have seen them go, primed for the fight, to that Western front which for them existed only in imagination. They have watched these fighters return, carrying war's honorable decorations, while they go on and on in their "drab" routine, carrying only the happy knowledge that the work they are doing is indispensable that fighters may come and go.

The net result of this drab existence, however, has been the building of docks and trackage in railway yards and storage depots for the Transportation Corps; the erection of cities of storage for the Quartermaster Corps; the installation of wharfage and storage where the Ordnance Corps has received and housed the weapons of defense and offense; the erection of hundreds of miles of troop barracks; the provision of hospitals for the Medical Corps; the furnishing of water supply for all branches of the service; the building of huge refrigeration plants, bakeries and oil storage to assure the combatant forces of their daily beef and bread and the means of their transportation in the zone of the armies; hangars and barracks for the Air Service; reception parks for the Motor Transport Corps, and the production of lumber in sufficient quantities to insure the rapid building of all this construction. Even much of the cement that went into construction for the A.E.F. was made in the S.O.S. by Engineers working in temporarily leased French plants.

Docks, Wharves and Always Barracks

In docks, absolutely new installations included a 4,100-foot dock at Bassens, near Bordeaux; three berths totalling 1,250 feet at Montoir, near St. Nazaire; 900 feet at Brest; a 750-foot lighterage wharf on the Dordogne river, near Bordeaux, and new trackage and other facilities at more than a score of French ports.

If all the troop barracks erected by the Engineers up to time of the signing of the armistice were placed end to end they would stretch 225 miles.

Space was provided in hospitals for 280,000 beds of which 141,000 beds represented new construction. This new construction meant 7,700 standard hospital barracks, 20 feet by 100 feet.

A total of 947 miles of standard gauge railroad trackage was laid. Most of this was in storage yards, engine terminals, etc., but it represents the approximate distance between New York and Chicago.

Covered storage space was provided in more than a score of depots, the largest of these depots being at Gièvres, Montoir and St. Sulpice. All covered storage aggregated 500 acres, providing space for a 90-day supply for 2,000,000 men.

Members of the second A.E.F., that Animal Expeditionary Force, were taken care of in remount depots and veterinary hospitals erected by the Engineers. By November 11, 1918, remount space had been provided for 29,000 animals and veterinary hospital space had been provided for an additional 17,250 animals.

Much work was done to supply troops, no matter where stationed, with pure water. Water supplies of several large French cities were chlorinated under Engineer control, while large-scale water works' installations, involving pipe lines and pumping plants, were made at St. Nazaire and Brest. In the Bordeaux district a series of artesian wells was sunk, yielding a total of 4,000,000 gallons a day. A curved concrete dam was built at Savenay, near St. Nazaire, which allowed for the storage of 200,000,000 gallons. Pipe for sewerage at the Mesves hospital project alone required 28 miles, and for water supply the same amount.

The refrigeration plant at Gièvres had a daily capacity of 7,500 tons of meat and the one at Bassens, 6,000 tons. At Issur-Tille mechanical bakeries were installed to produce 800,000 pounds of bread every 24 hours.

By construction of tanks at sea-coast, storage was provided for 75,000 barrels of gasoline. Sixty-nine 300-barrel tanks and 150 150-barrel tanks were manufactured for distributing stations. Seventeen complete storage stations, including pumps, were put in operation.

The motor reception parks at St. Nazaire, Brest, Bordeaux, Nantes, Le Havre, Rouen, Marseille, La Pallice and Rochefort were built by Engineers for the Motor Transport Corps. Air Service construction, whereby housing was provided for pilots and planes, was superintended by Engineers.

Engineers maintained and repaired highways and constructed new roads in the S.O.S.

From March to December, 1918, the total tonnage of Engineer supplies received from the United States was 1,500,000, and the total tonnage received from all sources, 3,250,000. Total covered space occupied by Engineer supplies totaled 764,000 square feet, and the total open storage space was 14,352,000 square feet.

Seven cement mills were operated by Engineer troops, producing 55,000 tons or 315,000 barrels of cement during five months of operation. Concrete pipe amounting to more than 100 miles was made for A.E.F. use.

Where Foresters Shone

All this construction required quantities of lumber of all sizes and grades. Ships to transport the needed lumber from the United States were not available, so Engineers produced that lumber here in France. When the A.E.F. was but an infant, stalwarts from the Northwestern States penetrated into the heart of the Vosges and the Jura mountains, established themselves in the timbered regions of the Landes province, and when the A.E.F. had become a seasoned fighting machine these warriors of the woods were sending their products in steady streams not only to large centers of construction, but to the front. During October of 1918 there were 81 mills in operation. Up to December 1918, these mills had produced 189,564,000 F.B.M. of lumber; 2,728,000 standard-gauge ties; 923,569 narrow-gauge ties; 2,739,660 poles and pit props; 892,200 steres of wood and 38,200 pieces of piling. The fuel wood, if corded, would extend 375 miles.

Thus, half of the Corps of Engineers of the A.E.F. was busied with constructive work, while that other half was bent on destruction, a destruction, however, that was only temporary and had as its real objective moral and social constructiveness. But while half of the Corps of Engineers in the A.E.F. was with the Armies, therefore essentially destructive, certain elements, though subjected to all the destructive forces of war, were, paradoxically, armed with constructive weapons. First among these were those regiments of Engineers who landed in France in the fall of 1917 and who operated the light railways in the zone of the armies.

Up to February 1, 1919, the total tonnage handled by the light railways was 860,652 tons, of which 166,202 tons was ammunition. In one week during the heaviest fighting 10,600 tons of ammunition were handled. From railheads to the front they carried ammunition. From the front to railhead they carried wounded. In five nights 23,135 of these wounded were carried. The daily net tonnage handled during October, 1918, was 8,160 tons. In one week 10,700 tons of rations were carried over this web of light railways.

Light Railways at Front

At the time of the armistice 2,240 kilometers of light railways were in operation, of which 1,710 had been taken from the Germans, the rest being newly constructed or rehabilitated. On November 11, 165 locomotives and 1,695 cars were available for use. Ten light railway shop and storage buildings, containing a total area of 70,000 square feet, were erected at Abainville; 125 acres were occupied by shop project; 2,300 cars were erected and 140 locomotives were repaired.

These railway troops operating with Armies were Engineers under the direct control of the Chief Engineer of the Army with which they were operating. There were also employed by the Chief Engineers of Armies many other special Engineer troops. Each Army had its own camouflage, searchlight, water supply, bridge, road, quarry, electrical and mechanical, and flash and sound ranging troops. With such technical services at hand the stage was set for the real actors, all combatant units, to put on the big "show."

Fighting, Too, Part of Job

Engineers operating with divisions not only performed such usual sapper tasks as cutting wire in front of an infantry advance, digging trenches, putting in machine gun emplacements, building dugouts, and doing bridge and road building, but they often took their places in the front line with the Infantry, going over the top, hewing their way through German defenses and sharing in the glory and the grief of combat. In such instances the Engineers successfully understudied the "leads" in the pageant. One of the most notable of these instances was when the 2nd Engineers, used as Infantry, won a citation from the French Armies of the North and Northeast, a citation to which was affixed the signature of Marshal Pétain. Here is the citation:

"The 2nd Engineers, under the orders of Colonel Mitchell, engaged unexpectedly in the offensive of July 18, 1918, in the middle of the night, on terrain which was unknown and difficult, displayed during two days, without allowing themselves to stop by fatigue and the difficulties of obtaining food and water, a remarkable ardor and tenacity, driving back the enemy 10 kilometers, capturing 2,700 prisoners, 12 cannon and several hundred machine guns."

There are numerous citations among Engineers for conspicuous bravery that won for them decorations in the United States, England, France and Belgium. Here is one among those railway troops, defenseless against German attacks:

"On March 21, 1918, when in charge of a light railway engine, he saw two British soldiers wounded by a shell which burst just ahead of his engine. He at once backed into the yard under heavy fire and returned with an empty car, picked up the wounded men and conveyed them to the C.C.S., one of the men dying on the journey." A private in the 12th Engineers wears the British Military Medal.

And It's Not Over Yet

The work of the Engineers has not stopped with the signing of the armistice. Early in the year it was ordered that they be put in charge of road reconstruction in those portions of France where American traffic had been most heavy during the trying months of America's participation. During early March there were more than 100,000 laborers employed on road reconstruction and repair, not all of them Engineers, but the work was done and still continues, under the direct control of the Division of Construction and Forestry, except for the area occupied by the Third Army, over which area the Chief Engineer of the Third Army has control.

Now that the great dramatic spectacle is ended, and the scenes are being taken down, the audiences and actors being escorted home, it is still the Engineers who are acting as stage hands to clean up and to set the stage for the next play: The period of reconstruction of devastated France.

Usually the Engineer neither seeks nor secures a great amount of credit for his accomplishments, yet his part in the A.E.F. has won favorable notice in the columns of that official press that has recorded the valorous deeds of all the American participants in the world tragedy

468,415 FRANCS FOR ORPHANS IS READY FOR FUTURE

Continuation Fund Mounts With Addition of S.O.S.'s Big Lump Sum

With the addition last week of the S.O.S. lump sum contribution of 179,649.21 francs to THE STARS AND STRIPES' War Orphan Continuation Fund, the fatherless kiddies of France became assured of a total of 468,415.74 francs to be used in their behalf in the future. This money is in excess of the 500 francs collected for each child's support for one year.

When the Christmas campaign for adoptions closed last December, money continued to be forwarded to THE STARS AND STRIPES for the orphans. A plan was conceived whereby this surplus would be placed in a Continuation Fund to be used for the future welfare of the youngsters. Into the Continuation Fund were sent donations ranging in size from the two francs' worth of subscription coupons to the 179,649.21 francs turned in by the S.O.S.

It is planned by THE STARS AND STRIPES' Section of the American Red Cross, which disburses all funds collected by this newspaper for the orphans, to use the Continuation Fund in supporting the most worthy cases in the family adopted by the A.E.F. Many individuals and units which adopted French orphans have arranged for the future support of their individual mascots by sending in checks sufficient to provide for them for varying periods. These sums are credited to the individual children specified, and when their first-year adoption expires the special Continuation Fund is drawn upon.

Not a few adoptors are returning to the United States without leaving forwarding addresses with THE STARS AND STRIPES' Section of the Red Cross. Consequently, copies of histories, photographs and letters of the children to their benefactors have been returned and are now being held at Red Cross Headquarters.

New contributions to the Continuation Fund:

S.O.S. contribution	179,649.21
Pvt. Frederick Witton, Jr.	150.00
Mrs. David Cahn, Paris, France	100.00
Maj. F. J. Schnell, 32nd Div.	5.00
Anonymous	2.00
Med. Dept., 116th Fld. Sig. Bn.	8.00
Hq., 110th San. Tr.	10.00
Co. B, 139th M.G. Bn.	38.50
Co. C, 110th Fld. Sig. Bn.	16.50
Amb. Co. 107, 110th San. Tr.	31.25
M.G. Co., 110th Inf.	12.50
Fld. Hosp. 138	37.50
Div. Q.M., 35th Div.	6.00
Army Post Unit	6.75
Co. A, 140th Inf.	8.50
36th M.P. Co.	12.25
Fld. Hosp. 140, 110th San. Tr.	54.00
Supply Co., 361st Inf.	5.50
Med. Det., 361st Inf.	6.00
M.G. Co., 361st Inf.	7.50
Co. B, 361st Inf.	14.00
Co. C, 361st Inf.	4.50
Co. D, 361st Inf.	12.50
Co. E, 361st Inf.	9.00
Co. F, 361st Inf.	46.50
Co. G, 361st Inf.	8.50
Co. H, 361st Inf.	41.50
Co. I, 361st Inf.	3.00
Co. L, 361st Inf.	18.50
316th Tr. Hq. and M.P.'s	24.00
Railhead Det., 91st Div.	2.50
Co. F, 363rd Inf.	13.50
Co. G, 363rd Inf.	3.75
Co. A, 316th Engrs.	24.75
109th Am. Tr.	151.50
Co. D, 319th Engrs.	75.00
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Total	468,415.74

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O. D. SCRIBES GET FIRST HAND DOPE

Former Newspapermen in Service Touring France and Third Army

Some 200 members of the A.E.F., officers and enlisted men, all of them newspaper men or professional writers before they abandoned the typewriter for the messkit, are now completing a tour of the S.O.S. and will within a few days debouch on the American Army's biggest battlefields preparatory to following the Third Army's trail up to Coblenz and beyond. And by their green arm bands ye shall know them.

The 200 are the second of three instalments of newspaper men in the service who are gaining first-hand knowledge of America's accomplishments in France under the official guidance of staff officers, gleaning the stories of the busy corners of the A. E. F. direct from the men who had charge of keeping things moving.

The first group completed its trip a week ago, after 15 days on the road, visiting among other places, Brest, St. Nazaire, Bordeaux, Chaumont, the Château-Thierry, St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne battlefields, and Coblenz, concluding with a boat trip down the Rhine to Cologne and thence returning to disband at Paris.

Members of the first group wore white arm bands. Those making the third trip will wear yet another distinctive color.

The journeys are being made in U.S. Hospital Train No. 63, the guests passing comfortable nights in bunks which once supported wounded Yanks en route to base hospitals and messing in two improvised dining cars. The battlefields are covered by ambulance, the party meeting the train at night in time for dinner and leaving it next morning.

WANT ANY MAGAZINES?

The American Library Association has just taken over the Y.M.C.A.'s magazine service for the A.E.F., and announces it is especially anxious to reach detached units not served by other welfare organizations. It offers a free weekly magazine service to all such units whose commanding officers will ask for it, addressing: Magazine Department, American Library Association, 10 Rue de l'Elysée, Paris.

The appointment of some member of the unit to look after the magazines and see that they are distributed and conserved is the only condition stated. Most units already have a librarian in charge of A. L.A. books, who might take on the job.

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