



## With the Colors

1/28/44

With United States Forces in France.—Giant concrete breakwaters built in England by United States Army Engineers were floated across the channel shortly after D-day to wall in the harbors improvised at the Normandy beachheads, it has been revealed at headquarters, Communications zone.

The artificial harbors made possible the Allied successes in the Battle of France by solving one of the most important problems of Army supply. Through them a greater tonnage was hauled over the beaches than could have been unloaded in almost any of the great continental ports.

For months before D-day, the Engineer soldiers worked in secret on a round-the-clock schedule, pouring concrete into vast steel ribs to form the floating breakers. Finally the barges were pulled from the Thames estuary town into the channel.

Looking like floating apartment houses, they were towed across to the shores of France. Watertight compartments responsible for their buoyancy were opened there, and the breakwaters sank in place.

One of the men who helped build them is Corporal Cliff Thompson, a former plumber from Austin, Minnesota. "It was a tough job, but we didn't need any passes to boost our morale," he says. "We knew what it was for."

Special training was needed for the men on the project. Two of the key men who gave it were Staff Sergeant James B. Forrest of Antigo, Wisconsin, a structural engineer with fifteen years civilian experience, and Master Sergeant Wayne A. Milton of Soso, Mississippi, a scaffolding engineer of seventeen years' standing. Private First Class Robert L. Coad of Rose Hill helped.

The construction units are now in action in Europe.

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Private First Class Lloyd Jones writes his mother, Mrs. G. L. Jones of Greenup, from somewhere in England under date of November 11:

"I will write a few lines tonight as I don't have much to do and everything is quiet around here. I haven't had any mail yet, but am still living in hopes.

"I guess they all celebrated Armistice back home, but you couldn't tell it here. I have been working in the battalion dispensary in a medical aid station. There is not much sickness. The PX opened for us so we can buy about all we need and it is cheaper here than in the states.

"I went into Woolworth's 5 and 10 cent store and bought a few things but all clothes and candy are rationed in England so we can't buy in town. We use Army ration cards at the PX. We bought old flat irons and do our own cleaning, but don't have much use for dress clothes here.

"I am pleased with the election returns, but haven't heard from Illinois yet. Don't let any of the radio news or newspapers excite you for we are a safe spot. Well, folks, I hope you have a nice Thanksgiving."

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Private First Class James W. McCoy writes: "It's been some time since I've written you so since I have a new address I wanted to let you have it. I will be looking forward to getting the Press regularly again.

I don't realize how much it does mean to me until I fail to get it for awhile.

"My location is now somewhere on the east coast. I expect to go overseas in the near future. I would be very pleased to hear from anyone who wishes to write me although I may not be very prompt with my answer.

"As Thanksgiving approaches I trust we shall not fail to thank the real Giver for all our blessings, lest we forget. Some may feel they haven't anything to be thankful for during this time of trouble and toil but I'm sure if they will only pause for a short while they can find plenty to be thankful for.

"Anyone wishing to write me can do so by sending their letters in care of my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Harry McCoy of Yale."

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An Eighth Air Force Fighter Station, England.—The promotion of R. F. Ratcliff of Newton from corporal to sergeant has been announced by Colonel Benjamin J. Webster, commanding the Eighth Air Force Fighter Command.

Sergeant Ratcliff has served as a personal equipment noncommissioned officer at this fighter pilot combat training base for eleven months. All pilots receive such personal equipment as inner flying clothing, parachutes, oxygen units, and Mae Wests, through Sergeant Ratcliff's section.

Before entering the Air Force, Sergeant Ratcliff was an independent driller of oil wells in Illinois and Texas. He formerly made his home in Athens, Texas, where his wife lives.

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Bluejacket Oscar J. Boehl, son of Mr. and Mrs. Otto Boehl of the Bend, graduated recently from the Naval Training school (amphibious fireman) on the Iowa State college campus at

Ames, Iowa.

Selection to attend the specialty school is based on results of recruit training aptitude test scores. The course of study covers the use, operation and maintenance of diesel engines and includes basic shop practice and the study of electrical fundamentals.

Oscar J. Boehl seaman second class, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, spent the last week end with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Boehl and family.