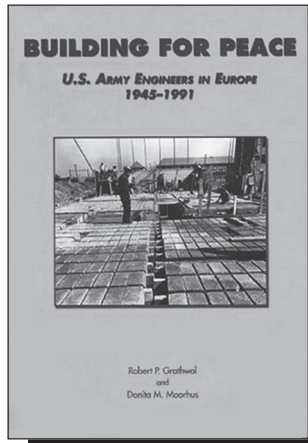


# Book Reviews



*Building for Peace: U.S. Army Engineers in Europe, 1945-1991*, by Robert P. Grathwol, Ph.D., and Donita M. Moorhus, U.S. Army Center for Military History, CMH Pub 45-1-1, Government Printing Office: Washington, D.C., 2005, 393 pages, GPO S/N: 008-029-00410-1, \$62.00 (paper).



It is difficult to make a technical history both readable and accurate. *Building for Peace*, by Robert Grathwol and Donita Moorhus, manages to accomplish both. This well-researched first volume of the Center for Military History's U.S. Army in the Cold War series tells the story of U.S. Army engineers in Europe from 1945 - 1991 in exquisite detail, making it recommended professional reading for all in the Army engineering community.

Organized into three parts, the narrative flows logically from efforts in postwar reconstruction (1945 - 1949) to the mutual defense of western Europe (1950 - 1973), and finally to the era of the Europe Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers®, and the end of the Cold War (1974 - 1991). The authors take great care to not only describe the mission and organization of the various Army engineer activities in Europe but also to establish the context that shaped the decisions taken by engineer leaders. This book is full of photographs, tables, and maps that help the reader visualize the events that transpired and the challenges facing U.S. Army engineers as they support the Army and Air Force in Europe.

Part one of the narrative describes the fluid situation facing Army engineers in the early days of the occupation of Germany, and does a great job of describing the engineering organization, priorities, and challenges overcome. The authors capture the difficulties of supporting

the drawdown and redeployment of the Army, while simultaneously developing ports and lines of communication for constabulary forces and helping reestablish critical civil infrastructure. They also capture the uncertainty of the circumstances in the immediate postwar era, culminating in the blockade of Berlin by the Soviet Union and the Berlin Airlift.

The second part of the narrative covers a much more extensive period of time and follows the evolution of engineering support in Europe through the challenges of crash construction programs for the buildup of Army forces in the early 1950s, of doing business with the newly sovereign West German Republic, and several evolutions of engineering organization built in response to the requirements of the day. The rationale for the establishment and employment of the Joint Construction Agency; the U.S. Army Construction Agency, Germany; and the Engineer Command are discussed in detail, as are the challenges they faced.

The largest part of this history is devoted to recounting the establishment, service, and ultimate inactivation of one organization: the Europe Division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from 1974 - 1991. It is clearly well researched; however, this part of the narrative seems to drag in the telling. The authors seem to put far more emphasis on discussing the details of programs and projects in this section. As a result, the narrative jumps around a bit rather than flowing chronologically, making it hard to follow at times. Even so, the authors convey the complexity and difficulty of the mission as well as the flexibility of Army engineers in meeting it.

This history is highly recommended to all in the Army engineering community. The flexibility, innovation, and professionalism recounted are worthy of study and reflection. No doubt today's Army engineers can draw lessons from their predecessors in Europe as they face today's engineering challenges in support of our Army and the nation.



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