
Appendix A
“Toast to the Corps!”

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In the words of General MacArthur, referring to our World War II operations in the Southwest Pacific Theater, he said, "It was an Engineers' War. "

Time magazine, describing the Southwest Pacific phase said, "The War in the Pacific is moving with the speed of the bulldozer, " indicating that Our advances were controlled by the speed at which our engineers could hew out and develop new air bases with each new landing operation.

Our engineers in the Southwest Pacific were a magnificent team.

- They embraced our topographic units for the mapping of this vast uncharted region.

- . They included our engineer amphibian units which led our landings and conducted vital shore-to-shore missions throughout our advance.

- Our combat engineers with each division were invaluable in their vital engineer support in every combat effort.

- 1 • Our engineer construction type units of all categories set a miraculous record in their speedy development of air bases, ports, roads, petroleum storage and distribution facilities, hospitals, depots, utilities, etc. in jungle and other wholly undeveloped areas in each of our successive landing operations.

The engineer contingent in each such operation constituted a major portion of each landing force.

At the end of World War II, our engineers of all categories approached 300,000 in total strength with many more planned for the projected OLYMPIC and CORONET operations for the invasion of Japan.

Morale is a most strong element in any organization and a great factor in contributing to its success. In recognition of that, I developed a toast to our Corps of Engineers. It created a good natured rivalry with the other arms and

branches of the service and with my fellow associates on General MacArthur's staff — but strangely enough, it is true. It goes as follows:

*To the Corps of Engineers
The Corps Elite,
The Mental Aristocracy of the Army,
The First Forward, and the Last Back,
The Corps Elite,
The Corps of Engineers.*

It is true that we are a “*Corps Elite*” as exemplified by the long record of accomplishment, both in our civil and our military operations, since our inception.

The phrase, “*The Mental Aristocracy of the Army,*” really wows them, but through the years, the top graduates of the Military Academy were chosen for the Corps, and those who entered from civil life were subject to most difficult examinations as compared to entrants to the other branches.

In each operation we were “*The First Forward and the Last Back.*” Our amphibian engineers manned the landing craft in the forward ranks of our landing forces. Our construction as well as our combat units had high early priority in such landings to initiate their vital missions. After such landings the tactical elements could be withdrawn for rest and re-equipment after the area was secured, but the demands on our engineers, on their almost superhuman task of rapid base development, could not be spared until virtually the last minute before they were staged for their next such operation. In some of our combat operations in the dense jungle, our engineer bulldozers preceded the tanks, which in turn preceded the infantry — again first forward. In our withdrawal operations, as on Luzon after the Japanese landings, our combat engineers in their divisions and our “Casey Dynamiters Teams” were also the last back as they dynamited bridges or destroyed other facilities immediately followed the rearmost tactical elements of our tanks or infantry.

Thus, I again propose a toast to our Corps of Engineers.