

problems? I know General Moore mentioned that there was a lot of jealousy involved and a lot of people didn't like the Corps of Engineers because they had the higher grades and had higher rank earlier.

A: Yes, there was a bit of jealousy. I don't think it was intense jealousy, but sort of a little resentment or envy as to why should these people here in this branch go on up, and over here somebody may feel that he's outstanding in his branch, and over there, let's say in the engineers, there's somebody who appears to them relatively mediocre and yet here he is up there. So apparently, as a result, they shifted the whole system and went into a single seniority list. Those of us who were in the engineers thought it was a little unfair in this respect, that when they put in the single list, they said that all those in company grade rank would be integrated by length of service but those who were majors or above would be integrated within their relative rank, by length of service. With those who were captains, first lieutenants, and second lieutenants, it didn't make any difference what their rank was; they were all listed just in the order of length of service seniority. Whereas the men above company grade were listed in the order of service seniority, but within their respective ranks. If they'd done that for the lower group, why then those who had been captains would have been on the captain list based on seniority and the first lieutenants would be on their list based on seniority, and then the second lieutenants. But the way it was, somebody down here who was a second lieutenant and had been in for a long time, who had gotten in early but never promoted, why he was up near the top of the company officer list. In the field officer grades they adjusted them by seniority, but within their respective field officer grade.

219th Engineer Regiment

Q: Upon your graduation from West Point, did you have any choice of assignment or were you compelled to take the assignment at the Engineer Officers Training School at Camp Lee?

A: No. All of the engineers in our class, I think, were sent down there initially as student officers, just for a couple of weeks. Then they selected some to be instructors, and I was among those initially so selected and stationed there.

That was during the summer, very shortly after graduation, when an order came out assigning about 38 or so officers to duty at West Point as instructors. These were not just from our class, but the whole list of officers who were being assigned to West Point to be instructors. Well, here the World War was on and if you were sent up there it meant you were going to be in the military academy for the duration of the war. Ed Leavey was also down at the Engineer Officers Training School, and he was an instructor along with me, and our names appeared on this list. So he and I went up to the Chief's Office to appeal for other active duty. We were the only two, I think, that got our orders changed, and he got to some outfit, and I got with the 19th Division with the 219th Engineers. So I got out of going to West Point while other people didn't.

Pat Timothy, for instance, went up to the Point as an instructor. And those who did were stuck up there for the duration of the war. But Ed and I, I think, were the only two on the list that got our orders changed. I got with the 19th Division, the 219th Engineers, and as a regular Army captain I was one of the senior officers of that regiment. It was commanded by Colonel Perley F. Walker, who was dean of the Engineering School at the University of Kansas. He had been an engineer reserve officer. Lieutenant Colonel Lunsford Oliver [USMA, 1913] and Major [Charles H.] Cunningham [USMA, 1916] were the other two West Pointers. We were the three regular officers of the Corps within the regiment.

I was commanding Company A of the 219th. We served there at Camp Humphreys for a while, and that was during the flu epidemic. We lost a number of men. Then we went out to Camp Dodge [Iowa] and joined the division in joint training activities in preparation to go overseas. In fact, we'd had our orders with an advance party at Hoboken [New Jersey] preparing for overseas movement when the war ended, so we didn't get overseas during the war.

Q: What was Camp Humphreys like in 1918?

A: It was not too well developed. When you were ordered to Camp Humphreys you went by rail and then you got on another dinky little railroad to Accotink and then from there to the camp. The camp just had temporary barracks, no special facilities. I think they did improvise or organize a little officers club. It was a good engineer training ground but nothing at all like

what Camp Humphreys, now Fort Belvoir, is now. But it was a good training area for engineer operations. It was purely an engineer post. I believe Colonel [Virgil L.] Peterson was in command. I believe we also had Lieutenant Colonel Bud Miller, who had also been in the Engineer Officers Training School and later was engineer of the Occupation Forces in Koblenz, when I again served under him.

Q: Did you get to see Washington, DC, much?

A: Not then, no, I mean during this early period. Later on [1919-1920], when we were there at Belvoir at the Engineer School, we'd get in to Washington on weekends. But during the war it was an all-out effort. We were going around the clock.

I was then relatively young, and at the Engineer Officers Training School I had much older men who were there as students. They were reserve officers, those who had come in to active duty. I remember a Piper, who headed up the Piper Aircraft, he was one of my students, and somebody else who was a magnate down in South America and owned a tremendous ranch down there was one of my students. We had field officers, captains and so on, as students, but we got along very well.

Q: What was your major subject of instruction?

A: Well, most of these were graduate engineers, civil, mechanical, chemical engineers, and so on, so we didn't instruct them in their technical fields. One of the things we sort of concentrated on was physical training, to get them into physical shape. We had a lot of military engineer training, such as demolitions, the use of explosives, military bridging, and field fortification. As you know, World War I was a defensive war rather than one of movement, and so we gave instruction on construction of fortifications, trenches, and layout of field positions, and rifle marksmanship. But just the essentials, basic essentials of the military. No advanced engineering or subjects like that. They supposedly had that and you were preparing them for their first assignment with an engineer unit so they would know how to salute and get into physical shape and so on, with some knowledge of military administration and handling of a unit.

Q: Here's a question I should have asked earlier: What was your favorite area of engineering at West Point?

A: Well, I don't know that I had any special one. I'd say it probably was civil engineering. Civil engineering seemed to be the principal subject. You had courses in chemistry, physics, and intensive courses in advanced mathematics. You got more of the technical engineering later when you went to the Engineer School. At least the first Engineer School.

In the early pre-war days the engineers had their own separate Engineer School. They had it at Washington Barracks. Engineer officers, after they had a bit of service, were sent there for a two-year course and given concentrated courses in civil engineering, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, river and harbor improvement. They had excellent laboratories, and they had very fine courses. Of course, there was no degree. Currently, the engineer graduates may go to the Engineer School to get refreshed on military engineering and courses like that but now get their advanced academic training in engineering mainly at civilian universities. They go to MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology] or Carnegie Tech or other such schools for some advanced courses in engineering and end up with a degree, usually a masters degree.

But at that time they weren't sending anyone to civilian institutions for higher education. You just did it at the Engineer School. During the war they were not operating the Engineer School to teach river and harbor development or similar courses. That was suspended and they had only the military activities going. When the war was over, they resumed the Engineer School, but instead of having it at Washington Barracks, which had been taken over by the General Staff, they set up the Engineer School at Fort Humphreys. It was a very fine Engineer School. They called in engineer officers, not just regular Corps of Engineers officers, but also other engineer officers, maybe some who had been dean of engineering or professor of engineering of some particular phase, as the instructors thereon the strictly technical engineering courses they were giving.