

SEE SECOND to the LAST PAGE: APPENDIX 3
HEADQUARTERS 61ST MEDICAL BATTALION COM Z ETO
OFFICE OF THE BATTALION COMMANDER
APO 562 US ARMY

29 January 1945

SUBJECT: Annual Report of the 61st Medical Battalion Activities,

TO : THE SURGEON GENERAL, US Army, Washington, 25, D.C.
(Thru: Technical Channels)

Under the provisions of AR 40-1006 and Letter AG 319.1 (9.15.42) EG-M, War Department, 22 September 1942, Subject: "Annual Report, Medical Department Activities," and Circular Letter #142, Hq ETOUSA, Office of the Chief Surgeon, dated 18 December 1944, file no. 319.1, the following 61st Medical Battalion Activities for the calendar year 1944 is hereby submitted:

I. TRAINING AND PREPARATION FOR INVASION OF FRANCE:

a. Activation and Assignment: The 61st Medical Battalion was activated at Camp Breckinridge, Kentucky, 25 September 1942. Basic Training was completed 4 January 1943. From 22 February 1942 to 21 March 1943, 16 Officers and 50 enlisted men furnished second and third echelon medical service for the 2nd Infantry Division Winter Maneuvers held at Iron River, Michigan. The Battalion was furnishing medical service to advance elements of the 2nd United States Army in the Tennessee Maneuver Area, April 1943, prior to its consecutive movements to Camp Gordon Johnston, Florida, Camp Pickett, Virginia and Camp Bradford, Virginia for amphibious training. Upon completion of amphibious training, the organization returned to Camp Pickett, Virginia, Prior to staging at Fort Dix, New Jersey and Camp Shanks, New York, the unit received Special Mountain training in the West Virginia Maneuver Area. The unit embarked at New York, 21 October 1943, landing in Liverpool, England, 3 November 1943 and travelled by rail to Swansea, South Wales, By 5 November 1943, the whole battalion was assembled at Camp Mynydd Lliw.

b. On 13 November 1943, the battalion was assigned to the 5th Engineer Special Brigade, which in turn was assigned to the First United States Army.

c. Upon notification that the 5th Engineer Special Brigade planned operations centered around 3 Combat Engineer Battalions, a request was made for reorganization to a Medical Battalion, Engineer Special Brigade, so that each Combat Engineer Battalion would have identical medical service. When the request was disapproved, three provisional collecto-clearing companies were formed as follows:

Provisional Company A: Co A (less station platoon) with 1st Platoon Company D attached.

Provisional Company B: Co B with station platoons of Co A and Co C 9 enlisted men of Co D Headquarters Section attached.

Provisional Company C: Co C (less station platoon) with 2d platoon Co D attached.

d. When the 5th Engineer Special Brigade organized its three Battalion Beach Groups, the 37th Battalion Beach Group included Provisional Company A; the 348th Battalion Beach Group included Provisional Company C; the 336th Battalion Beach Group included Provisional Company B. The Company D Commander became a Battalion Staff member, supervising the two regular clearing platoons and the third provisional clearing platoon.

e. From 4 January 1944 to the Invasion of France, D-Day, 6 June 1944, each provisional company participated in a series of Engineer Battalion team exercises designed to perfect its part in the Invasion. Each Battalion Beach Team moved to Scurlage Castle, Glamorgan, South Wales. While there, the medical company learned the functions of other arms and services through "County Fair" method demonstrations. Each Provisional company practiced landings from DUKWs, selected sites in relation to the road net and set up a station; learned to work in cooperation with Naval Beach Medical Sections and learned to load casualties on DUKWs. Activated mines and booby traps gave realism to these exercises and gave the men a healthy respect for this type of beach defense. Casualties were designated by umpires for evacuation to seaward craft in DUKWs. The Commanding Officer of the Medical Battalion transported men of other Provisional Companies to the Maneuver Area to act as Casualties so as to give the student company more practice.

f. On 8 March 1944, Provisional Company A, participated with the 37th Battalion Beach Group in the V Corps Exercise "FOX" at Slapton Sands. Here the 37th Engineers supported the 16th Infantry Regiment of the 1st Infantry Division. Units were divided into craft loads and marshaled as such; vehicles were waterproofed. Personnel, equipment and vehicles were loaded in landing craft at Portland and an assault was launched against Slapton Sands. After a 3 day exercise, they returned to Swansea, 15 March 1944.

g. On 4 April 1944, the three Battalion Beach Groups of the 5th Engineer Special Brigade conducted a two day problem at Oxwich Bay, South Wales.

h. On 23 April 1944, the unit, minus Provisional Company B, left Swansea, divided into craft loads. They were taken to marshalling areas near Dorchester, England, and were briefed for Exercise "FABIUS I", another assault on Slapton Sands, which was the dress rehearsal for the projected assault on France. Again the 37th Engineer Battalion Beach Group supported the 16th Infantry Regiment.

i. On 15 May 1944, Field Order #4 of the 37th Engineer Combat Battalion was published. This was the order for the Invasion of France.

j. The various officers of the 37th Battalion Beach Group were briefed at the Brigade S-3, Top Secret Nissen Hut in Camp D-11 Dorchester on the evening of 22 May 1944.

Maps, charts, aerial photographs and a model of the coast of France on which the landing was to be made were on display and used for reference during the talks. On 23 May 1944, the Area D Camp was sealed off and briefing of troops was begun the following morning. The briefing tent contained displays of maps, aerial photographs, charts giving climate wind, sea and surf data and information regarding the enemy and their defenses. There was also a model of the section of the coast of France on which the landing was to be made, it gave details of mission and assignments. This gave each man a clear picture of where he would land, the type of beach and terrain he would encounter and also showed what was expected of his unit as a part of the operation as a whole. This briefing continued for two days.

k. After the two days of briefing the 37th Battalion Beach Group was split into craft loads and the various parts of it moved to the marshalling areas respectively assigned. On 2 June 1944, loading into naval craft was begun at Portland and Weymouth, Southern England.

l. Training of the other two provisional companies paralleled that of Provisional Company A. Provisional Company C participated in the "FABIUS I" operation. Between exercises, a continuous program of basis and technical training was in operation. Selected officers were given short courses in Shock Treatment and Plaster Techniques at various General Hospitals. Eight attached Surgical teams of the 3rd Aux Surg Gp [3rd Auxiliary Surgical Group] participated in the "FABIUS I" exercise and aided in preparing the clearing platoons. The provisional clearing platoon reviewed all technical subjects applicable to a clearing platoon.

m. The advantage of the provisional collecto-clearing companies was that the Medical Battalion could furnish an independent, identical collecto-clearing company to each of the Brigade Battalion Beach Groups. One disadvantage was the difficulty in establishing new chains of command for there were clearing platoon commanders attached to junior company commanders and there was a disproportionate number of non-commissioned officers in the provisional platoon. In addition the reconciliation of disparities between loading tables made up according to T/O and tables made by Engineer Group Commanders who preferred to use only Provisional Companies A, B, or C, was a never ending source of confusion. This difficulty was accentuated when the companies were redesignated and given numbers.

II. MISSION IN THE ASSAULT OF FRANCE:

a. The First United States Army and the British Second Army supported by the United States and Allied Naval forces were to land on the Northern Coast of Normandy, France and establish beachheads for the continuation of further joint operations inland. The British Army was on the left, the United States V Corps, with the 1st Infantry Division on the left and 29th Infantry Division on the right were to assault the center beach "Omaha" and the United States VII Corps, with the 4th Infantry

Division was to assault “Utah” beach on the right. The initial assault force on Omaha Beach was Force O, the 16th and 18th Regimental Combat Teams of the 1st Infantry Division with the 116th Regimental Combat Team of the 29th Infantry Division. The 16th Regimental Combat Team was to land on Sectors Fox Green and Easy Red of Omaha Beach, seize high ground north of Treviers.

4

The 18th Regimental Combat Team starting at H plus 3 hours was to land on Easy Red, assemble, covered by the 18th Regimental Combat Team, and move with the greatest speed to assigned sector and prepare for all around defense for high ground at Treviers, The 26th Regimental Combat Team was to land on order of the Commanding General, V Corps and prepare for all around defenses of ground northwest of Bayeux.

b. The assault on Omaha Beach was supported by the 5th and 6th Engineer Special Brigades organized as a Provisional Group. The three Battalion Beach Groups of the 5th Engineer Special Brigade, the 37thm 348th and 336th supported the three Regimental Combat Teams, the 16th, 18th and 26th respectively.

c. Each Provisional Medical company was under direct control of the Commanding Officer of the Regimental Beach Group Commander. Only when the Brigade Headquarters took full charge of the beach operations would the Battalion Commander take direct command of the medical companies. See Appendix #1.

d. Each Provisional Medical company and Hq & Hq Det 61st Med Bn were assigned a number of vehicle and personnel spaces. Each provisional company commander in consultation with the Beach Group Commander made loading tables for his men and vehicles, so that danger of loss would be at a minimum.

e. The Battalion Staff at the time of the Invasion was:

Battalion Commanding Officer: Lt Col George G. McShatko, Oxxxxx, MC.

Battalion Executive Officer: Major Charles R. Brandt, Oxxxxxxx, MC.

S-1: WOJG William T. Deneen, Wxxxxxxx, USA.

S-2: 1st Lt (Then 2d Lt) George M. Peters, Oxxxxxxx, MAC.

S-3: Capt Fred M. Doyle, Oxxxxxx, MC

S-4: Capt Jerome N. Brandt, Oxxxxxx, MAC.

Det Comdr: Rodney W. Lehman, Oxxxxxx, MAC.

Provisional Co A: Capt Prentiss M. Kinney, Oxxxxxx, MC.

Provisional Co B: Capt Maurice E. Rowem Oxxxxxx, MC.

Provisional Co C: Capt James R. Martin, Oxxxxxx, MC.

Co D Commanding Officer: Major (then Capt) John V. Nash, Oxxxxxx, MC.

f. Softening up the beach defenses had not proceeded to the point the briefing had led the assault troops to expect. Due to weather, bombers could not risk laying bomb patterns too close to the coast, but instead, concentrated on inland targets. Naval support did not develop to its full capabilities because of poor land-sea communication. At the time Hq & Hq Det, Provisional Company A and Provisional Company C landed, the beach was still under observed enemy artillery fire, Speaking of the 6th Naval Beach Battalion in the 5th ESB History, the following passage appears, “These men were under heavy fire while moving over the beach, and especially while loading into craft, as the enemy’s observed artillery fire along the beach continued to be very effective throughout the day”.

g. 6 Officers and 12 enlisted men of Hq & Hq Det 61st Med Bn landed on Easy Red Beach at 1300 hours on D-Day, Not authorized medical pouches, instead bring typewriters, field desk, blank forms etc., arrived before collecting elements. They immediately foraged for medical supplies from aid

5

pouches of dead company aid men and in wrecked landing craft. They treated many casualties. See Appendix #3 for Citation.

h. Provisional Company A was delayed because the small boats of the LSX Empire Anvil were unable to make a second trip to shore as planned. Finally the company was loaded on LCI #29 which made a run for the beach twice but veered away when it was apparent that other craft were unable to land. At 1500 hours, the craft beached in one sector of Easy Red which was clear of beach obstacles. The men were unable to leave the beach because a minefield lay between the beach and the bluff. The exits they had expected to use were several hundred yards away and covered by artillery fire. However, the litters and plasma that were handcarried were needed. Casualties were landed on whatever landing craft were available. In a few hours the dressing station was moved to the captured pillbox. See Appendix #4 Overlay. Here the attached surgical teams gave expert emergency medical care and casualties were sheltered from artillery fire. On the night of D-Day when there were no craft landing near Exit E-3, this station sheltered at least 50 seriously wounded men. One truck load of equipment was located that night. Two ward tents were set up beside the pillbox on a wide dirt shelf against the hill. For action on D-Day, the 37th Engineer Combat Battalion and attached troops received the Distinguished Unit Badge. See Appendix #5.

i. Provisional Company C landed in two APA’s and three LST’s had a rough cross-channel voyage. Most of its men landed far to the right on Dog beach. This company established a sheltered station in an anti-tank ditch near entrance E-1. See Appendix #3 for Citation.

j. The casualties for Provisional Companies A and C and Hq & Hq Det 61st Med Bn were: 5 EM KIA, 5 Officers WIA, 20 EM wounded. This casualty figure is for Force O troops only.

k. The established number of casualties evacuated is stated in Appendix #4.

l. See Appendix #4 Overlay for location of stations on D plus 2.

m. All of these stations received battle casualties evacuated from division clearing stations, field hospitals and evacuation hospitals as they were established. The surgical teams operated on beach casualties and debrided wounds of casualties sent back from the front. In the early days of the operation, many splints were replaced with plaster casts before patients were evacuated to sea. Penetrating wounds of the chest and abdomen were held 7 days before evacuation. At night when enemy aircraft circled over the beach, the patients frequently commented that they preferred the front to intense anti-aircraft barrage. Although trenches were dug for litter patients, it was impossible to take them into slit trenches. Hospital ward attendants would hit the ground on the level with the patients on litters. Red Crosses painted on ward tents marked the station. The stations were at least 600 yards from the ammunition dumps on the crowded beach. With the exception of sniper fire, there was no enemy action against the collecto-clearing companies.

n. In the first operation report, Lt Col McShatko recommended that in future operations, the provisional medical company idea be abandoned, that on only two clearing platoons be used unless a complete platoon is attached where

6

necessary. He recommended that the Clearing companies remain under battalion control. The Battalion Commanding Officer in his capacity as Brigade Surgeon, can more easily make a sound disposition of medical elements as tactical situation develops. A recommendation was made that Surgical Teams be held on board ship on call. In a difficult landing, their services cannot be used to full advantage because of delay in receiving equipment. Moreover, three Surgeons were evacuated for wounds as a result of unwarranted exposure. The LST blankets and litter unit were absolutely necessary; the litters and plasma carried by the medical soldiers were badly needed. Every landing craft should have a reserve so that if it is disabled, medical supplies can be salvaged.

o. On 10 June 1944, the first aid evacuation from the Normandy Beachhead was begun and all priority cases were directed to the Provisional Company C station near the St. Laurent airstrip. On 17 June 1944, the three collecto-clearing stations were consolidated into one air and sea holding station at that site. The Clearing Company Commander became the Station Commander although the whole battalion was engaged in the operation.

p. Pursuant to Letter, Hq First US Army, reference ETO/SG (e), dated 7 April 1944, "Redesignation of Elements of 61st Med Bn Mtz", the 61st Medical Battalion, Mtz, was reorganized and redesignated in accordance with T/O 8-26, 8-27 and 8-28, dated 20 May 1943, per General Order #1, dated 10 April 1944, Hq 61st Med Bn:

Hq & Hq Det 61st Med Bn, Mtz, became Hq & Hq Det 61st Med Bn, Co's A, B, C and D became 391st Med Coll Co, 392nd Med Coll Co, 393rd Med Coll Co and 643rd Med Clr Co respectively.

These new numbers have not been used up to this point in the history because the old designations were used throughout the Field Orders.

q. Ambulances were detached from Collecting Companies and posted at Engineer Battalion Aid Stations for evacuation of casualties to clearing stations. An average of five 2½ ton trucks were used in transporting supplies from beach to dumps. On 17 July 1944 a new airstrip was opened for air evacuation, The Brigade Group Surgeon formed an Omaha Beach Air and Evacuation Holding Station in which the 643rd Med Clr Co assisted by the 391st, 392nd and 393rd Med Coll Co's and Hq & Hq Det 61st Med Bn processed all litter casualties and the 499th Med Coll Co and one platoon of the 634th Med Clr Co processed the ambulant cases. On 1 August 1944, the 643rd Med Clr Co designation was changed to the 61st Med Bn Holding Station with Lt Col McShatko in direct command. During this period the greatest volume of air evacuations was accomplished. The personnel of the battalion was adapted to the changing needs. Each medical officer was responsible for the care of two or three wards. (An attached surgical team cared for all surgical emergencies from the beach area). 3 Medical and Surgical technicians were assigned to each ward. Patients were evacuated from evacuation hospitals to this station in a continuous flow. Walking wounded were removed at the control station. The litter patients had forms 521 and 53a completed by an admitting team. A medical officer reviewed each case and decided whether he would go to surgery for resplinting or shock treatment, whether he would go into the tent for first priority air evacuation, whether the patient needed to be held in abdomen or chest wards or whether he would go to a low priority ward. On a day in which the station was full and air evacuation was begun late in the day, it was necessary to empty wards one after another and fill them as soon as they were emptied.

7

Taking the admitting team to the wards as they were filled. Many patients came to the station having missed one or two meals. Every man was fed no matter what time he arrived. Twenty five ambulances had to be on call for the sudden appearance of planes diverted for evacuation, Two 12 hour shifts of 50 litter bearers were required to unload ambulances and to load ambulances for the airfield.

r. On 12 August 1944, 8 medical officers and 30 surgical technicians of the 56th General Hospital were attached to raise the permanent capacity of the holding station to 1000 beds. In another week the tactical situation had changed so that the station was empty. See Appendix & note change between 7a and 7b.

s. Hq & Hq Det, 61st Med Bn, 391st, 392nd and 393rd Med Coll Co's and 643rd Med Clr Co, passed from control of First US Army and assigned to Communications Zone, ETO, effective 7 August 1944, per Troop Assignment #15, dated 14 August 1944, Hq Twelfth Army Gp.

t. Hq & Hq Det, 61st Med Bn, 391st, 392nd and 393rd Med Coll Co's and 643rd Med Clr Co, passed from control of Advanced Section Communications Zone and assigned to Normandy Base Section, Communications Zone, 17 August 1944, per Troop Assignment #12, dated 17 August 1944, Hq CZ

(Forward).

- u. On 1 November 1944 the 61st Med Bn moved to a site 4 miles west of Cherbourg and prepared to operate a 400 bed Staging Area Hospital and associated dispensary service for 5 divisions and other non-divisional troops being staged in the Valognes Staging Area. Six dispensaries with a medical officer, two technicians, with equipment and ambulances were placed so that patients could be transported to the Staging Area Hospital, All quarters cases and patients requiring short hospitalization until their parent unit was alerted for movement and then returned to duty. Personnel requiring specialized diagnosis or therapeutic procedures beyond the capabilities of this hospital and patients whose convalescent expectancy precluded their return to their units were transferred to a general hospital. In order to maintain the morale of these troops and to improve medical service, 16 nurses were attached. The battalion continued to furnish 20 ambulances on call to the Normandy Base Section Surgeon for unloading hospital trains.
- v. The 391st Med Coll Co moved to Granville, France 5 Nov 1944, The 392nd Med Coll Co moved to Vierville, France (Omaha Beach) 5 Nov 1944. The 391st, 392nd and 393rd Med Coll Co's relieved from attachment to 61st Med Bn on 28 December 1944. Permanent change of station per Movement Order #676, Hq NBS, CZ, ETO, dated 24 December 1944.
- w. On 16 November 1944, the 61st Med Bn moved to a site 2½ miles west of Valognes to take over the site, equipment and patients of the 66th Station Hospital. 10 Nurses were attached. From period 26 December to present, Hq & Hq Det 61st Med Bn and the 643rd Med Clr Co with attached 10 nurses, furnishing station hospital service to units in this vicinity, However, a detachment of 70 German POW's which has been replaced by a Company of 250 POW's is being used to full advantage in replacing some of our men.

8

III. IMPROVISATION OF EQUIPMENT:

- a. The chief improvisation of equipment followed the need of augmenting the clearing platoon equipment for use of attached surgical teams. Aided by suggestions of the attached 3d Aux Surg team chiefs, the clearing company manufactured six pairs of collapsible wooden horses to hold a litter at convenient level for surgery; convenient arms rests which could be attached to litters for giving intravenous infusions; instrument trays which fitted into the horses; overhead lights moving on wires stretched between tent poles; and pelvic rests for body casts. In addition to these items, a third complete set of clearing station platoon equipment was authorized, Each platoon was furnished additional dressings, plasma a refrigerator, a washing machine, fluoroscope and a 2.5 generator, a necessary item for continual operation.

IV. CONSERVATION OF MANPOWER:

a. Use of German prisoners of war has been a distinct aid in conserving manpower. In the collecting stations, they were used as KP's in the patient's mess; they operated the laundry for the hospital; they dug latrine pits and sumps and also dug slit trenches for hospital personnel. In establishing a new site in unbroken fields, they were of great help in putting in motor pool hardstanding, gravel walks, drainage ditches, sumps and latrines. At present, protected personnel are used as; ward men in POW wards, in Ward kitchens and in patient's mess. Utilities uses carpenters, painters and tent repairmen. All ground maintenance work is done by POW's.

V. HOUSING:

a. From 6 June 1944 to 1 November 1944 enlisted personnel were housed in pup tents. While there was danger of enemy air raids and anti-aircraft flak, there were shelters for all personnel. All hospital installations have been under canvas. At present the tents are on concrete floors with wooden doors and wall board sidings. After 1 November 1944, all personnel were housed in pyramidal tents.

VI. WATER SUPPLY:

a. At camp Mywydd Lliw, Glamorgan, South Wales, all water was obtained from a Municipal Water plant. Adequate water was transported in water cans and trailers for the Invasion. From 8 June 1944, water was obtained from Engineer Water points. At the present site, water is piped to the station which has 0.5 ppm Chlorine at faucets and alkalinity of PW 7.0. Trailers bring drinking water direct from the water point because of rust in the pipes.

VII. BATHING FACILITIES:

a. Field expedients were used for showers in the field operations. During November and December, showers of the British type have been available for all patients and enlisted personnel.

VIII. LAUNDRY:

a. All assembled laundry for the hospital has been handled by Quartermaster Laundry Platoons. Individuals have washing days and do some of their own laundry or have arrangements with French civilians for this service. At present a Quartermaster Laundry Platoon is available for enlisted personnel's laundry.

IX. FOOD AND MESSING:

a. Individual field rations of Types K and D were used for the invasion. Type C was used for the few days following the invasion. 10 in 1 and 5 in 1 were used until July when B type became basic rations. Ration has been adequate. Mess personnel are competent and experienced.

X. SEWAGE AND WASTE DISPOSAL:

a. Garbage has been handled by civilians throughout the year. Human waste was disposed of in deep pit latrines boxes made according to QM specifications. At present, the station uses heavy buckets because of the high ground water. Human waste is buried in deep pit latrines by POW's.

XI. INSECT CONTROL:

a. No problem. Although all installations were fly-proofed, there were few flies.

XII. VENEREAL DISEASE CONTROL:

a. Current War Department and ETOUSA directives were complied with. Prophylaxis station maintained on a 24 hour basis at Dispensary. Individual Chemical and Mechanical prophylactic kits distributed free of cost to all personnel. All members were shown TF 8-154 (Sex Hygiene) and all members had attended sex morality lectures and discussions. Monthly physical inspections as required by Par. 1 AR 615-250 were held.

[No XIII included]

XIV. TREATMENT OF BATTLE CASUALTIES:

a. All treatment conformed to Manual of Therapy, ETO, and directives of First US Army. In the early days of the operation, casualties were evacuated as soon as they were transportable, whether they had had definitive treatment or not. As the surgical teams were able to function, all cases requiring debridement were debrided before evacuation. During the Battle of St. Lo, many cases were evacuated without debridement, however, a wounded soldier could be returned to the UK in less time than he could receive debridement on the continent.

XV. NURSING:

a. In the collecto-clearing stations and holding stations, all nursing was done by medical technicians. The sympathetic and conscientious service that these men rendered cannot be too fully praised. While operating a staging area hospital and a provisional station hospital, 10 to 16 nurses were attached for temporary duty. In all cases they have adapted themselves to the organization with facility and have improved the medical care.

XVI. DENTAL SERVICE:

a. Dental service consisted chiefly of emergency dental work in the collecto-clearing and holding stations. The dental officers examined all fractures of the mandible and maxillae among the battle casualties to make certain

They were transportable or render them transportable if necessary. Many of these casualties when admitted had the teeth “wired together” for splinting; all had to be changed to “rubber band splints” for evacuation by sea and air. In addition, this command operated the only dental clinic on the Omaha Beach for the treatment of emergency dental cases.

XVII. EVACUATION:

a. When the 61st Medical Battalion operated the Holding Station, 82½% of the total evacuation was by air, 17½% was evacuated by sea. The inherent difficulties in air evacuation, chiefly, the lack of predictability due to changing weather conditions, were ever present. However, the superiority of air evacuation over sea evacuations was obvious. A staff of flight surgeons and air corps operational officers were bivouacked in the battalion area and maintained air liaison. An evacuation center was established by higher headquarters to coordinate the activities of this station with those of an adjacent holding station handling ambulatory patients with a capacity of 300. On D-Day it was estimated that a total of 600 casualties evacuated by sea. The debris that littered the beach plus obstacles and artillery fire made sea evacuation extremely hazardous. On D plus 1, a total of 400 estimated casualties were evacuated by sea. See Appendix #6.

XVIII. RECREATION:

a. Seasonal sports were stressed. Movies were shown at least twice a week. A public address system was installed during the year, musical varieties and news reports were broadcast at frequent intervals during the day. A weekly magazine allotment was received each week and an allotment of books every month. During the months of June and July, three units of the USO gave stage performances. In September, Divisions that were staging in the Staging Area, gave GI Variety Shows for the Staging Area Hospital. Full use was made of available recreation passes to Paris.

Commanding Officer:

PETERS,

MAC,

For the

G. M.

1st Lt,

S-3.

[6 Appendices: Appendices 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 not included]

Appendix 3

CITATION FOR BRONZE STAR MEDAL

Master Sergeant Royal N. Clements (Army Serial No. XXXXXXXXX), Medical Department, United States Army, for meritorious achievement in connection with military operations, as Sergeant Major, Headquarters Detachment, 61st Medical Battalion, on 6 June 1944. Master Sergeant Clements and his detachment of administrative personnel landed on Omaha Beach at 1400 hours on D-Day with office records for establishing the battalion command post. As fierce enemy resistance disrupted landing schedules the battalion medical companies had not landed when the detachment went ashore and there was urgent need for medical aid men. With complete disregard of his own safety Master Sergeant Clements immediately rendered first aid to the wounded, gathered what available supplies and equipment he could, organized litter squads and evacuated beach casualties for nearly nine hours. Although slightly wounded himself, he evacuated his detachment commander, who was wounded in action. Although one-third of the detachment was wounded or missing, the mission was accomplished at 2300 hours without loss of any battalion records. His prompt dealing with the medical emergencies of the landed is highly commendable and his devotion to duty while exposed to continuous enemy fire reflects great credit upon himself and the military service. Entered military service from Ohio.

Sergeant Thos Perjel (Army Serial No. XXXXXXXXX), Medical Department, United States Army, for meritorious service in connection with military operations, as Clerk, S-3 Section, Headquarters 61st Medical Battalion, on 6 June 1944. Sergeant Perjel with great initiative and complete disregard for his own safety administered plasma, first aid and general medical attention to the wounded on the Normandy Beachhead. At the risk of his own life he courageously swam through a heavy surf to the aid of two drowning soldiers and later assisted in the rescue of eight others by swimming to a sinking LCVP with a lifeline. This outstanding display of courage, leadership and action beyond the call of duty reflects high credit upon himself and the armed forces of the United States. Entered military service from Ohio.

Private Mark E. Altman (Army Serial No. XXXXXXXXX), Medical Department, United States Army, for meritorious achievement in connection with military operations, while serving with the 61st Medical Battalion, Separate, on 6 June 1944. Private Altman, while salvaging medical supplies on the beach, which was littered with wrecked Naval craft and Army vehicles, and under heavy artillery and mortar shell fire, heard cries for help from two soldiers struggling in extremely rough water where they were being tossed about near a partly submerged LCT. They were approximately 20 yards from the LCT and about 100 yards from shore. Without regard for the risk involved Private Altman seized two lifebelts nearby, and swam to the men in distress, thus risking his own life in the rough sea and running surf, plus added dangers of uncleared mines, obstacles under water, and the accurately placed artillery shell fire from the enemy's positions overlooking the beach. Private Altman left a lifebelt with one man and swam ashore with the other who was panicky and nearly overcome. He then swam out again and brought ashore the other man who was wounded in the arm and not able to swim. After administering first aid to the second man, he directed him to an evacuation point. Private Altman's courage and faithfulness in twice placing his own life in jeopardy in order to save two soldiers from drowning, reflects great credit upon himself and the armed forces of the United States. Entered military service from New York.

Technician Fourth Grade Robert D. Molinari (Army Serial No. XXXXXXXXX), Medical Corps [Department], United States Army, for meritorious achievement in connection with military operations, as Pharmacist, 643rd Medical Clearing Company, 61st Medical Battalion, on 6 June 1944. Technician Fourth Grade Molinari landed with his platoon on Omaha Beach at 1500 hours on D-Day. He went to the aid of one of his wounded comrades who was endangered by constant shell fire and the incoming tide. He dragged his comrade to the safety of a tank ditch approximately 150 yards away, Upon the accomplishment of this act, he continued to administer medical aid to other wounded soldiers in his immediate vicinity until darkness prevented him giving any further aid to the wounded. His devotion to his duties under continuous shell fire from the enemy is deserving of the highest praise and reflects great credit upon himself and the armed forces of the United States. Entered military service from California.

The following enlisted men of Headquarters Detachment, 61st Med Bn received the Award of Bronze Star Medal, but no official citations have been received as yet:

Technical Sergeant William S. Keck, XXXXXXXXX, Medical Supply Sergeant.
Technical Sergeant Albert L. Wood, XXXXXXXXX, Battalion Utilities Sergeant.
Technician Fourth Grade Vincent F. DiBasso, XXXXXXXXX, Message Center Chief.
Technician Fifth Grade Francis M. Becker, XXXXXXXXX, Battalion Supply Clerk.
Private First Class Orville G. Garth, XXXXXXXXX, Detachment Supply.
Private First Class John R. Stafford, XXXXXXXXX, Battalion Supply Clerk.
