

Undated History of the 3111th Signal Service Battalion

By Lt. Col. John W Arnold, Battalion Commander

3111th's Tour of Duty reads more like a travelog than what it actually was, the places we trained and the places we worked.

Activated at Camp Charles Wood, Fort Monmouth, New Jersey on 20 January 1944, we left the USA from New York City via Camp Kilmer on 31 March 1944, voyaged across the Atlantic on the Queen Elizabeth and arrived at Garrick, Scotland 6 April 1944.

From the adjoining town of Grennoch, we entrained for Camp Fargo, near Stone-Henge on the Salisbury Plains. Dartmoor (Pneumonia Hill), Yelverton, Plymouth, Rabbit Gulch, Warminster, Camp Boreham, and the Southhampton Marshalling Yards saw us all.

8 June 1944 and our advance elements were on the beaches. 6 July 1944 saw our main body at Utah Beach.

From Catz a few days later, we mushroomed out all over the Normandy Peninsula – Cherbourg, Carentan, Valognes, Omaha Beach, St Mere Eglise, La Haye-du-Puits, and a bit later Canisy, St Lo and Avranches.

17 August and our tour of duty had taken us to Le Mans from where some units left for Nogent-le-Rotrou. Our advance elements were at Etamps on 20 August 1944 and other members spread out from nearby Briere to Chartres, Alencon, Rambouillet, Versailles, and Paris.

3 September and the 3111th was at Reims, with some units subsequently at Soissons and Chalons sur Marne. Namur, Belgium received our first advance party on 11 October 1944 and from there somewhat later teams went out to Maastricht, Lille, Huy, Foye, Charleville, Verviers, Longwy, Vise, Metz and Nancy. As early as 15 September 1944 our units were in Liege.

Came 10 January 1945 and we had men at Aachen, Germany. 20 April 1945 and we had reached Fulda, Germany after passing through Bonn and Diez on the trip from Namur.

From Fulda, we mushroomed out once more – to Frankfurt, Nurnberg, Kassel, Cologne, Bremen and Potsdam (near Berlin). 16 June 1945 marked the beginning of the road back. Advance elements returned to Paris and Versailles on that date, with the majority of the battalion joining them in early July, 1945.

Working in Paris, others proceeded to Versailles, Orly Field, St Cloud and St Germaine. Alerted for redeployment late in September 1945, 3111th was relieved of most technical operations on 15 October 1945, moved to pyramidal tents at Villacoublay (outside of Paris) late in October 1945 and prepared for the long-awaited call, "Homeward Bound"

Courtesy of Patrick Dugan, grandson of the late Technician Fifth Grade James J., Blessing, Co. A