

# An Appreciation

Hq. 20th Engineers (For.)  
U. S. M. P. O. 717  
December, 1918

*To the Officers and Soldiers of the Twentieth Engineers and Attached Service Troops:*

ON November 25, 1917, the first board was cut in France by American Forestry Troops at a little French mill in the Jura Mountains. At the same time, another detachment was getting out 50-foot piling in the Landes on escort wagons drawn by hand. The total cut during December, 1917, was 321,000 board feet of lumber and 12,000 railroad ties.

When the armistice was signed on November 11, 1918, the 20th Engineers were operating 81 American Sawmills and producing 2,000,000 feet of lumber and round products every working day. Up to December 1, we have cut a total of 272,500,000 feet of lumber, including 2,728,000 railroad ties, together with 38,000 pieces of piling, 2,739,000 poles of all sizes and 892,000 steres of fuelwood.

Recent reports from the various depots and construction projects of the A. E. F. show that the Army was at the time of concluding the armistice well supplied with lumber. When ties were called for in large quantities to support the advances of our troops at St. Mihiel and the Argonne, they were ready. At practically every dock project, deliveries of piling and lumber were well ahead of the construction. In other words, the Forestry Troops have made good on the work for which they were brought to France. Notwithstanding the difficulties in obtaining equipment and transportation, notwithstanding the enormous increase in the size of the A. E. F., and the work which it undertook over the original estimates, the Army has been given the lumber which it needed, and the suspension of hostilities finds us with a substantial surplus which will be used for the restoration of France. This is an achievement in

which every man in the Forestry Troops may well take pride, for every one of you have had a share in it. Your part in winning the war has been as important as that of any other troops in the A. E. F. Your loyalty and enthusiasm have been put to a hard test. You wanted to get to the front, but could not. You have had to put in long hours of the hardest kind of work, month after month, without glory or excitement, and without the



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Commanding 20th Engineers (Forestry)

special forms of recognition given to combat troops. The Medical Officers have told us that the Forestry Troops were being worked too hard, but the only answer has been a steadily increasing cut of lumber from month to month. You have failed in no task that has been assigned to you. You have gotten more out of sawmills than had ever been dreamed of by mill operators at home. Time and again, in spite of difficulties such as lumbermen never contended with before, you have exceeded our expectations. Your record as members of the A. E. F. will be a source of pride and satisfaction to you as you return to civil life. It will be your recompense for the sacrifices which many of you have made to come to France.

As Commanding officer of the 20th Engineers, I thank you for the untiring and uncomplaining way in which you have done your work. I am glad to have been identified with such a body of American soldiers.

A copy of this order will be sent to every company and detachment of the 20th Engineers, and attached service troops; read to the troops, and posted on the Company or Detachment bulletin board.

J. A. WOODRUFF,  
Colonel, Engineers.