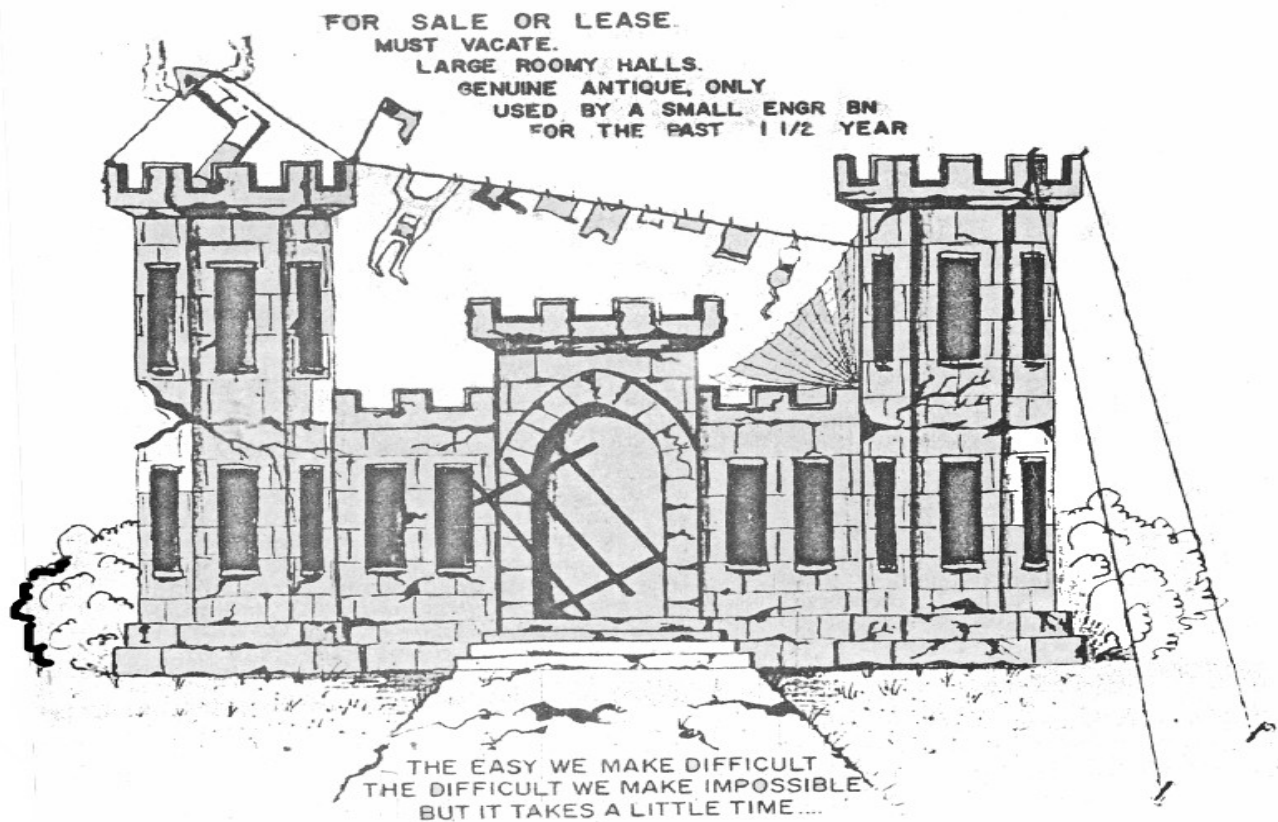
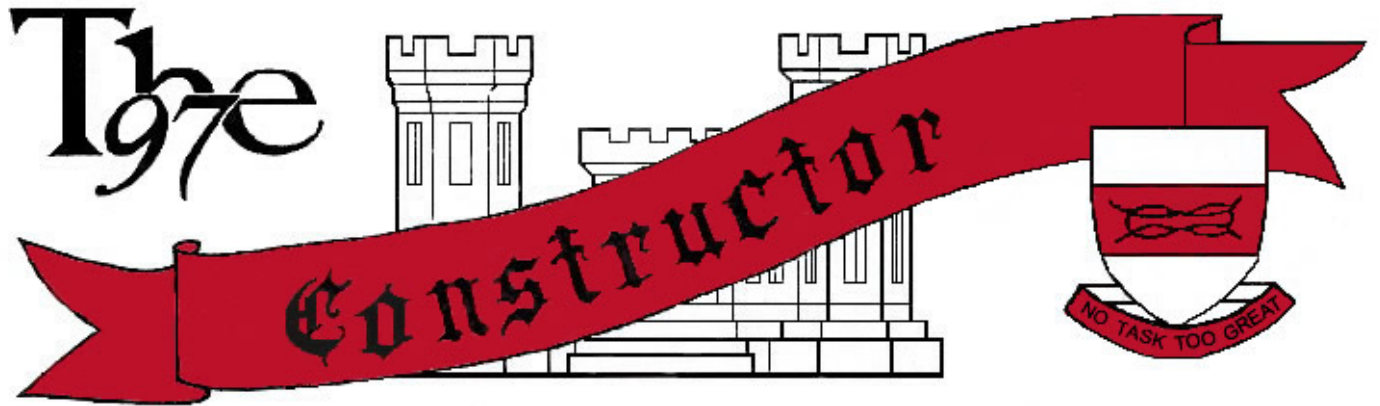


The Constructor



Transcribed by MAJ (Ret) Larry L. Castleman
Re-published by CPT (Ret) Donald M. Ricks, Webmaster, 97th EBC

COMPANY A WINS PARTY

Story by 2LT Edmund R McCarthy

PIRMASENS, Germany – On 26 Apr 68, the Second Reforger Inspection Team departed the 97th. That same day, the men of the Bn stood in formation waiting for the results compiled by the inspection team to be announced. The results of two short weeks of concentrated effort by every man in the unit.

The ensemble of officers made their way in front of the Service Club. The companies in turn were brought to attention and parade rest. The report was given and the commander was talking to his men. His men were listening, hopefully, anxiously, for the reward of hard work and extra effort. “You all did well,” they were told but who won? Then the answer, A Co.

A Co was dismissed by the ISG, and men scattered everywhere, perhaps not too militarily, but very happily. Smiles, laughter, shout of joy. A three-day weekend. A company party. Even a few beers won and enjoyed smugly, paid for by certainly not losers but by those not quite so good.

To whom does the credit belong? To Field Maintenance for supporting the Bn? To Company Maintenance, for correcting 50% of the gigs? To the Equipment Platoon for pulling first off of most of the vehicles in the company? To all, that’s who. Everyone knew what had to be done, and they went out and did it. They deserved to win.

But the trucks still sit in the motor pool. Work on them has not been completed. There are still packing lists to be typed, OVM boxes to be packed. Still more jobs for 3rd shop. PREPO is sneaking up for the attack. We thrive on success, and we won’t be stopped now. Watch us go.

WANTED – ‘DEAD OR ALIVE’

By LT Gary Burgin

He’s terrible! He’s awful! He represents the lowest form of life on earth; his soul may be good enough to get him into HELL! Shoot him on sight. During the past four months he has stolen approximately \$20,000.00 worth of government property. The dollar value utterly fails to describe his contemptuous deeds. The mental anxiety he has caused may send several motor officers to Landstuhl’s ‘quack ward.’ He’s

driving Clyde Clayton to drinking. He’s already driven ‘Doc’ from drinking. The Bn has lost thousands of man-hours of labor through the senseless acts of this maniac.

The local crime-fighters are certain that this mentally deranged man is not a member of D Co. Their company has been ravaged by the unidentified madman. But alas, all the companies have been victimized. It’s logical. Surely such a criminal is not a part of the ‘NO TASK TOO GREAT’ Bn. Who would have the audacity to hamper the Bn Reforger effort at a time like this? Surely he will be caught and punished as all other criminals are. But for the present, repair parts are still being borrowed in the motor pool.

SOUTH BOUND (CHAPTER TWO OF THE 97TH ENGR BN HISTORY)

The 97th Engr General Service Regiment returned to the United States from Alaska just as they had come, by sailing from Valdes to Ft Lewis, WA. After four intensive months of training the prepared 97th Engineers reported to San Francisco, CA. Leaving the U.S. from that port, the Regiment travelled directly to Finschhaven, on the northeast coast of New Guinea. This locale had been recaptured from the Japanese on 22 Sep 1943 and was part of the growing chain of bases where engineers were busy constructing roads, airfields, and camp facilities necessary to carry the Pacific war effort ever northward. Here the men of the 97th stayed to contribute their experiences and manpower until the close of WWII. For their wartime accomplishments, the 97th Engr were awarded the Meritorious Unit Streamer for the American Pacific Theater.

After the cessation of hostilities with Japan, the 97th was reorganized as the 97th Engr Gen Unit Services Bn and moved north to San Francisco, Del Monte, Luzon, and the Philippine Islands on 30 Jun 1946. After general port reconstruction projects there, under command of MAJ Robert C Holmes Jr, the 97th moved on 1 Mar 1947 inland to Angeles, located about 35 miles north of Manila. Camp Angeles was in the making about two miles south of Clark Field, a hotly contested airstrip in WWII. The Bn, temporarily under the command of MAJ Robert C Coffin, and later under MAJ John E Veatch, set about its major task of

constructing the facilities of the new post with its traditional enthusiasm and professionalism. One of its final assignments was the construction of the PHILRYCOM Ordnance Depot, which continued into early 1948. Co C was inactivated on the first of the year, and the rest of the Bn of 615 men followed suit on 15 Mar 1948 while still stationed in the Philippine Islands. Thus, almost seven years after activation, the story written by the 97th Engr Bn ended with 2846 days of continuous, distinguished service on the history books.

SFC TO MISTER

(05-68-01.jpg: LTC Dupont and Mrs Lynch pin new WO bars on Mister Lynch.)

PIRMASENS, Germany – SFC Charles E Lynch, was appointed as Warrant Officer on 30 Apr 1968. Mister Lynch has established himself as one of the finest NCOs ever to serve in the Bn. His performance in Co A, as Field Maintenance Platoon Sergeant was an example of what can be done to everyone who worked with him. His penchant for plans and systems for accomplishing all tasks was remarkable. Mister Lynch has received the National Defense Service Medal and the same metal with Oak Leaf Cluster. He has received the first four awards of the Good Conduct Medal. He received the Army Occupation Medal (Germany) and the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (Dominican Republic). In addition, Mister Lynch has been awarded the Army Commendation Award.

Mister Lynch departed the Bn on 8 May 1968 with his wife Walburga. Mister Lynch will report to Ft Sill, OK for a three-week warrant officers school before continuing to Qui Nhon, Vietnam. It is certainly regretful that the 97th was unable to retain such a knowledgeable warrant officer.

CONSTRUCTOR

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C COMPANY'S INTENSIFIED MAINTENANCE

PIRMASENS, Germany – Once again, old 'Charging Charlie' came through. The first inspection by FXRG-CMMI made it seem like old Charlie Co was far behind the pack, which is an unusual place for them. Then came the second inspection of the Bn. A contest was announced, old Charlie ran a close second

to A Co and ahead of the other construction companies.

Since the second inspection, Charlie Co has turned into 3rd Shop for acceptance, 25 pieces of ordnance equipment and 18 pieces of engineer equipment. This means that Charlie Co has turned in to date approximately 30.2% of all equipment turned in.

A vote of thanks go to CWO Bissette, Motor Officer and SSG Chavis, Motor SGT, Platoon Cmdrs, Platoon SGTs and their men who have burned the mid-night oil in order to get all tools inventoried, dipped, and requisitioned.

Many pieces of equipment and tools – kits – and outfits, had as high as 75 to 175 deficiencies upon the completion of the 1st inspection. The 2nd inspection saw a great change. CMMI deficiencies averaged about twenty-five.

RHINE ORDNANCE BARRACKS (R.O.B.) IS COMPLETED

By SP5 Fred Kamps

In early spring 1966, Co B received the first construction directive from USAREUR Engr Command for the project at Rhine Ordnance Barracks, Vogelweh, Germany. The initial directive was for the construction of ten controlled humidity storage building, improved roads, and development of the site. Since the initial construction was begun there has been one additional major directive from Engr Gp, and the battalion commander and construction section. These directives often contradicted each other as well as adding to and changing the original plans. This was only the beginning of the many problems that Bravo faced, bringing this project to completion.

Throughout the time R.O.B. was under construction, the weather continued to go from bad to worse. The rain as well as the many weeks of freezing weather prevented much of the work from progressing according to schedule. In addition to this, much time was lost due to Bn training including weeks spent at Bridge Training and ORT. To make up for lost time, men from the other platoons of the company were put to work often as much as 12 to 15 hours a day and seven days a week.

Due to the length of time the project was under construction there were many changes of personnel

There were a total of eight project officers including LT's McCormick, Steib, Simmonds, Ellenbogen, Heverin, MacNeill, Kinzer and King. These officers worked under three different company commanders as well as three Bn CO's. These many changes caused a few minor misunderstandings, but as a whole the direction administration of the project was carried out smoothly.

There were many instances of a shortage of materials on the job site and these often delayed the progress many weeks. During the final months of work, the battalion's preparation for deployment to CONUS under REFORGER severely limited the amount of equipment and manpower available to complete the project. Despite this, the final seeding of grass took place on 17 May 1968. After more than two years of work, Co B again proved the 97th's motto 'NO TASK TOO GREAT' when the project was turned over with zero defects.

HAVE VEHICLE WILL SUPPORT

(05-68-2.jpg: Members of the 293rd and 249th Engr Bn who are supporting the 97th Engineers.)

PIRMASENS, Germany – When the vehicles of the 97th Engr Bn were ordered on Administrative Deadline, the 24th Engr Gp arranged for the Bn to get drivers and vehicles on loan from the Sister Battalions within the Gp.

The 249th Engr Bn located in Karlsruhe, Germany sent nine drivers with vehicles to support the 97th. The NCOIC of this group of drivers was SSG McComb who was later replaced by SSG Creel. The drivers are SP4 Larry Boone, SP4 Larry Turek, SP4 Neil Grown, SP4 Robert Messer, SP4 Alvin Williams, and SP4 Harold Eisiminger.

The 293rd Engr's located in Baumholder sent seven drivers with vehicles to support our battalion. The drivers from the 293rd Engr Bn are PFC Ronald Wilson, PFC Quimby, SP4 Jimmy Johnson, PFC Creque, PFC Morris, SP4 Morris and SP4 James.

SP4 Roberts of the 24th Engr Gp Aviation Section has also been driving in support of the Bn.

These drivers have given our Bn many hours of accident free driving and without their support it

would be very difficult if not impossible to meet our Reforger Mission.

OFFICERS HOLD 4TH MESS

PIRMASENS, Germany – Officers of the 97th Engr Bn (Const) conducted their fourth in a series of Formal Messes at the Pirmasens Officers and Civilian's Open Mess on Sat, 4 May 1968. Honored guest at this occasion was BG Roy S. Kelly, USAREUR Engr. LTC Albert A Dupont, as President of the Formal Mess, invited several officers in the local area to attend this Corps of Engineer traditional dinner.

BG Kelly gave a brief presentation on the role of the 97th Engrs had played in the rebuilding of Europe culminating with Operation FRELOC. Further remarks by BG Kelly touched upon the challenges the professional soldier faces now and the new trials and opportunities to be met in the future. Departing from the usual procedure of adjourning to the CRUD table at this point, two 'awards' were given. First, CPT Thomas H Meadows presented CWO Lynch with a plaque with which the Officers and Men of the 97th wished to express their gratitude to one of their hardest working and most proficient supervisors. Then, in a surprise to LTC Dupont, 1LT Brian Heverin presented him with a small 'trophy' containing a bulb full of Leeheim mud. This was in commemoration of the muddy experiences the Bn had at Bridge Training last Nov and early Dec.

C COMPANY TAKES OVER EM CLUB

PIRMASENS, Germany – On Fri afternoon, 3 May 1968, a party was held for Co C at the Melody Club. One of the foremost features of the party, which contributed to its gaiety and success, was the advanced planning of the entertainment committee. With precise evaluation of the location, expected guests, visitors and personnel under consideration, an abundant supply of food and drinks was on hand. The party was attended by the largest majority of Co C personnel, many bringing their family and friends. It was scheduled to last from 1300 to 1700 hrs, but many stayed longer. SSG Anderson was given a retirement gift by the 1st Platoon which he was Platoon SGT. He was also given a gift by the Officer's and NCO's of Co

C honoring his 20 years of service and retirement. The party was financed by the Unit Fund and sponsored by SFC Ibarra.

CPT MEADOWS RECEIVES ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL

PIRMASENS, Germany – At 1630 hrs, 7 May 1968, the 97th Engr Bn was called to attention at a hastily called formation for the purpose of presentation of the Army Commendation Medal to CPT Thomas H Meadows, Jr, departing Executive Officer.

The citation read: "CPT Thomas H Meadows, Jr, 05 416 935, Corps of Engineers, United States Army, is cited for meritorious service from Oct 1965 to May 1968 as a Platoon Commander, Co Commander, Bn S-3 Officer, and Bn Executive Officer, 97th Engr Bn, United States Army, Europe. CPT Meadow's knowledge and leadership in each of these positions was outstanding. As a Platoon Commander, he organized an efficient and responsive third echelon repair unit during the extremely turbulent period for the Bn S-3 caused by Operation FRELOC. As a Co Commander, CPT Meadows' company stood second to none, performing their assigned missions and tasks in an outstanding manner. As the Bn S-3 and Executive Officer he was instrumental in organizing the simultaneous training and redeployment actions needed by the battalion of Operation REFORGER. This too was accomplished in outstanding fashion. CPT Meadows' outstanding performance of duty and exceptional dedication reflect great credit on him and the United States Army."

The next day, CPT Meadows departed the Bn and Army after three years of diligent service.

ADVANCE PARTY SENDS BACK A ROUND DOORKNOB

(05-68-3.jpg: LTC Dupont with the round doorknob from states.)

PIRMASENS, Germany – To the men of the 97th. If you wonder what type of instruments are used back in the world just come over to personnel and take a good look at our round doorknob. It was sent straight from the States by 1LT Ross A Johnson. The purpose of the doorknob is to allow people to adjust to the fact that

they do still have round doorknobs back home. You may encounter some difficulties at first, such as one 1LT who rammed his face into the door. After this tragic experience it was suggested to have a sign put-up explaining the proper procedure of entrance. Thanks to a certain Warrant Officer in our Bn, this suggestion was carried out and has helped to cut down on many accidents and saved many precious noses. If you have been in Europe and away from home for a long period of time, please accept our invitation to come over and get the feel of our foreign soon to be used, round doorknob.

(05-68-15.jpg: I told you this was for a 2 ½-ton. But no “it goes on a ¼-ton. I told you so...”)

(05-68-16.jpg: Are you sure there is going to be wheel changing events at Ft Riley?)

[DID NOT TYPE ‘RACES IN EUROPE,’ AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

[DID NOT TYPE ‘MOON PROJECT FOR ENGINEERS,’ AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

[DID NOT TYPE ‘CRUD RULES,’ AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

[DID NOT TYPE ‘CLASSIFIED ADS,’ AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

TRIBUTE TO OUR GREASE MONKEYS THAT WERE CAUGHT WORKING IN THE MOTOR POOL

(05-68-4.jpg: Yep right after PREPO the CO said we were going to have a ‘relaxed training season.’ Lets really get to work...)

(05-68-5.jpg: Hmm, is it i before e or e before i? Where’s that 2404??)

(05-68-6.jpg: If you want to stay in Europe ‘cruitt,’ see SGT Stadler. But don’t hide under out low-boy.)

(05-68-7.jpg: I don’t think we have a blade for an 830M in here. Let’s check this other drawer.)

(05-68-8.jpg: See Sarge, the GIG sheet says a blue Thingamijig should be over this here Whatsyoucallit. Then I can turn this Thingabobb in for PREPO.)

(05-68-9.jpg: Let’s see now the transmission is low on oil, hmmm better get some help. Besides it’s probably 2nd Echelon work anyway.)

(05-68-10.jpg: Hope we meet the guy that stole our carburetor needing first aid sometime.)

(05-68-11.jpg: Pssst...Don’t look now but there is a photographer watching us. Try and act casual.)

(05-68-12.jpg: Let’s see are we supposed to cover TM’s with this GOOP or sell it for 5 cents a bowl..?)

(05-68-13.jpg: Are you sure this clock isn’t suppose to be preserved...)

(05-68-14.jpg: After five months washing this thing, there goes the last of the Leeheim mud. Just in time for the ‘relaxed training season.’)

CLASSMATES?

Ssg Rowland, Otise	Hopkinsville, KY
SP5 Frederick, Michael F	Appleton, WI
PFC Paukner, Milton	Hunt, AR
PFC Benton, Gary	Kansas City, KS
PFC Nunes, Joseph D	Williston Park, NY
PFC Johnson, Alexander	High Point, NC

97TH EBC PROMOTIONS

<u>TO</u>	<u>NAME</u>
<u>HQ CO</u>	
SP5	Villemure, Fred W
SP4	Dyson, James V
SP4	Franklin, Harold R
SP4	Howe, Skipper L
SP4	Hussak, James F
SP4	Morton, Harvey
SP4	Viens, Norman E
<u>A Co</u>	
SP5	Fox, William R
SP5	Finnell, Robert A
SP5	Takach, Arthur G
SP5	Irwin, Ossie
SP5	Van Cleave, Walter M
SP4	Myers, Kenneth D
SP5	Henderson, John M
SP5	Gehr, Charles M
SP5	Kelly, Robert D II
SP4	Biagi, Dean A
SP4	Brown, Wayne W

SP4 Ehly, Lewis G
 SP4 King, Alvin R
 SP4 Regenbrecht, Walter R
 SP4 Younger, Douglas J

B Co

1LT King, Michael
 SP5 Devine, George D
 SP5 Lovett, Robert W
 SP5 Kramarz, Michael F
 SP5 Broadway, Robert L
 SP5 Coleman, Reid C
 SP5 Cambell, Michael L
 SP5 Rice, Merlin R
 SP5 Gulp, Edward H
 SP5 King, Arnold R
 SP5 Buckland, Frank S
 SP4 Bilkington, Brenton L
 SP4 Swanson, Stephen L
 SP4 Hughs, Larry W

C Co

SGT Havener, Boyd H
 SP5 Taroya, Frank
 SP5 Vela, Daniel
 SP5 Robinson, Bobby G
 SP5 Garrison, Harold E
 SP5 Mohr, Philip E
 SP4 Brandon, Ralph B
 SP4 Martinez, Rufus D
 SP4 Orme, Vernon H
 SP4 Tomlinson, William J

D Co

SP5 Pankow, Edward
 SP5 York, David E
 SP5 Silverstsen, Gary L
 SP5 Fleming, Clarence W
 SP5 Ruthledge, Kenwon E
 SP4 Duttonhefer, James J
 SP4 Hatfield, Hershel G
 SP4 Landers, Eddy A
 SP4 Long, Ronald E
 SP4 Olivares, Jose M

SP4 Ricker, Timothy L
 SP4 Rodriguez, Jesus
 SP4 Saucedo, Florencio M
 SP4 Shaw, Ronald H
 SP4 Tetreault, Alfred J
 SP4 Washington, Willard W
 SP4 Allen, Garry L
 SP4 Allen, Larry G
 SP4 Smith, Travis

SPORTS IN THE BATTALION

(05-68-17.jpg: PFC Sullivan (Butch) Runion with 1st Place trophy.)

(05-68-18.jpg: SP4 Carl Y Osment took 2nd Place.)

Officers, NCOs and all married men in the battalion were flexing and toning their muscles Sat, 11 May at the Dahn Playgrounds.

It was the old story of who is on third when LT Hunter was replaced as a runner with his wife.

Our horseshoe champion SGM McKenzie was beginning to feel his oats until some of the wives showed up and started throwing ringers.

Meanwhile back on the volleyball courts, all was fun until someone made a serve that broke 1SG Christopher's, of B Co, two liter beer mug. Someone overheard the first shirt say that SP5 Self might see himself on the duty roster more often.

All is not work at Ft Riley for the advanced party; 1SG Grindy bagged a 2-½ pound pike at Milford Lake.

SP4 Carl Y Osment won 2nd place in the Kansas State Hot Rod Association at Manhattan Raceway Park, Sun, 5 May with his 1965 Ford Falcon.

While SP4 Osment made a real good showing it was not good enough. PFC Sullivan (Butch) Runion took the 1st place trophy in his 1967 Chevy Impala.

Forty men of the 97th Engr Bn enjoyed a two-day trip to Luxembourg, while others were beating the track to Berchtesgaden.

[DID NOT TYPE, 'UNCLE SHORT,' AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

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