THE GENERAL BOARD

United States Forces, European Theater

GRAVES REGISTRATION SERVICE

MISSION: Prepare Report and Recommendations Covering Graves Registration Service in the European Theater of Operations.

The General Board was established by General Orders 128, Headquarters European Theater of Operations, US Army, dated 17 June 1945, as amended by General Orders 182, dated 7 August 1945 and General Orders 312 dated 20 November 1945, Headquarters United States Forces, European Theater, to prepare a factual analysis of the strategy, tactics, and administration employed by the United States forces in the European Theater.

File: 321/9

Study Number 107

Property of
Office of the Chief
Military History
General Reference Branch

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUBJECT	PAGE
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 2: MISSION, ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONS	2
Section 1 - As Determined From Pertinent War Department Publications	2
Section 2 - As Determined From European Theater of Operations Publications	2
Bibliography	5
CHAPTER 3: EVACUATION	6
Section 1 - Organization and Procedure	6
Section 2 - Discussion	11
Bibliography	13
CHAPTER 4: IDENTIFICATION	14
Section 1 - Procedure	14
Section 2 - Reports and Records	18
Section 3 - Discussion	21
Bibliography	22
CHAPTER 5: BURIALS	23
Section 1 - Cemeteries	23
Section 2 - Hasty and Isolated Burials, including Disinterments and Reburials	29
Section 3 - Discussion	33
Bibliography	35
CHAPTER 6: PERSONAL EFFECTS	36
Section 1 - Collection and Documentation	36
Section 2 - Discussion	38
Bibliography	39
CHAPTER 7: ORGANIZATION OF GRAVES REGISTRATION UNITS	40

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Cont'd)

SUBJECT		PAGE
CHAPTER 8:	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	45
APPENDIX 1:	Ltr, Headquarters American Graves Registration Command, European Theater, (Rear), APO 887, dated 24 November 1945	49

THE GENERAL BOARD
UNITED STATES FORCES, EUROPEAN THEATER
APO 408

REPORT ON GRAVES REGISTRATION SERVICE

Prepared by:

Col Thad A. Broom, 018246, Chief, Quartermaster Section
Maj James R. Howton, 0377891, Quartermaster Section
Capt John R. Tolbert, 01582582, Quartermaster Section

Principal consultants:

Brig Gen John B. Franks, 011063, USA
Col Henry W. Bobrink, 08636, QMC, American Graves Registration Command (USFET)
Lt Col John I. Ladd, 0309951, GSC, G-1 Section
Capt Edward M. Mize, 0461638, Chap, Chaplain Section

THE GENERAL BOARD
UNITED STATES FORCES, EUROPEAN THEATER
APO 408

GRAVES REGISTRATION SERVICE

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1. General. The purpose of this study is to make certain recommendations for changes in Graves Registration policies, procedures, equipment and personnel and to present a compliation of experiences and ideas that have arisen during the campaign in the European Theater of Operations on Graves Registration activities. An effort has been made to select representative comments and experiences on all phases of Graves Registration not covered to any great degree by War Department publications, European Theater of Operations Standing Operating Procedures and Standing Operating Procedures of units. Although some parts of this study are not intended to support certain conclusions and recommendations, it should be borne in mind that they are presented in the light of continuing the narrative of Graves Registration activities. Certain extracts have been presented from publications on various Graves Registration matters, some briefly and others in detail. These presentations will serve as a guide for those who will be responsible for Graves Registration activities in the future.

2. Scope. This study covers Graves Registration activities as indicated below. Certain methods and procedures peculiar to the Army Air Forces are covered in General Board Study 109, file 401/11, Chapter 7, title: "Supply and Services for the United States Air Forces and the supply of other than United States Army Forces.

a. The mission, organization and functions of the Graves Registration Service as determined from War Department publications and publications prepared in the European Theater of Operations based on actual field experiences.

b. A detailed study of evacuation, outlining the various methods used by different armies, corps and divisions.

c. A study of identification, outlining procedures followed and reports and records required for the identification of deceased personnel.

d. Burial procedures in cemeteries and procedures followed by the various combat units in hasty and isolated burials.

e. The procedures followed in the collection and documentation of personal effects of deceased personnel.

f. A detailed study of the organization of various Graves Registration units in the European Theater of Operations and a comparative analysis of the Graves Registration Company organized under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-297 with the company as organized under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-298. It will be noted this latter organization was never used in the European Theater of Operations.

CHAPTER 2

MISSION, ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONS

SECTION 1

AS DETERMINED FROM PERTINENT WAR DEPARTMENT PUBLICATIONS

3. Mission. The mission of the Graves Registration Service is to care for deceased military personnel and civilians accompanying the army interred outside the continental limits of the United States. The Graves Registration Service personnel also cares for civilian, allied and enemy dead when circumstances of war make this necessary.[1]

4. Organization and Functions. In time of war there is organized a Graves Registration Service. The Quartermaster General, in addition to his other duties, is designated Chief, American Graves Registration Service, and is charged with the formulation of policies for its operation outside the continental limits of the United States. He is authorized to correspond direct with the Chiefs of Graves Registration Services outside the Continental United States on matters pertaining thereto. Instructions issued to the chiefs of Graves Registration Services outside the Continental United States conformed to those included in FM 10-63 and Section II, AR 30-1805.[1]

SECTION 2

AS DETERMINED FROM EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS PUBLICATIONS

5. The European Theater of Operations.

a. In the European Theater of Operations, the Chief, Graves Registration Service, served in the dual capacity of affording staff supervision and technical control over Graves Registration functions in both the combat zone and the Communications Zone. Operations in each of these zones were delegated to the commanding generals thereof. The Chief, Graves Registration Service exercised both responsibilities through the Graves Registration Division, Office of the Chief Quartermaster. The Graves Registration Service consisted of:[2]

(1) Chief, Graves Registration Service, Communications Zone.

(2) Graves Registration Officers of Armies and higher units in the combat zone.

(3) Graves Registration Officers of units in the Communications Zone not under the command of Communications Zone.

(4) Graves Registration Officers of all combat and service units.

(5) Graves Registration Officers of depots,

hospitals, airfields, and similar establishments.

(6) Graves Registration Companies.

b. The functions and responsibilities of the Chief Graves Registration Service, European Theater of Operations, as prescribed in pertinent European Theater of Operations publications and directives, were as follows:[1]

(1) The preparation of a complete plan or organization for the Graves Registration Service units within the European Theater of Operations and its expansion in conformity with the general plan of operation and approved priorities.

(2) Efficient operation of the Graves Registration Service.

(3) Establishment and maintenance of simplified and uniform methods of administration, operation and procedure for all Graves Registration activities in the European Theater of Operations.

(4) The coordination of activities of unit Graves Registration officers in subordinate commands with commanding officers of combat units, the Medical Department, and chaplains.

(5) Development of new, improved, or special techniques and methods in connection with the execution of his technical duties, to meet the particular requirements of the European Theater of Operations.

(6) Maintenance of the principal office of record on Graves Registration matters.[2]

6. Communications Zone. Graves Registration Service, insofar as it pertained to the Communications Zone, operated under the Commanding General, Communications Zone.[2] Commanders of the highest administrative headquarters within the Communications Zone were directed by European Theater Standing Operating Procedure to appoint an appropriate Graves Registration Service Officer to coordinate all Graves Registration Service matters.[2] Communications Zone section commanders were responsible that officers of their commands assigned Graves Registration duties carried out the technical instructions received from unit or higher echelon Quartermasters.[2] The Chief of the Graves Registration Service in each section, base section and advance section of Communications Zone was the Section Quartermaster. He discharged his responsibility for all graves registration activities in the section through the Graves Registration Division, Office of the Section Quartermaster.[3]

7. Graves Registration Service, Army Group. Each United States Army Group in the European Theater of Operations included on its staff a Quartermaster Section which acted on matters pertaining to Graves Registration Service in subordinate commands. Quartermaster activities in the

6th Army Group were under the Quartermaster Sub-Section of the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-4.[4] The 12th Army Group included a Quartermaster Special Staff Section.[5] Since both Army Groups were primarily tactical, no Graves Registration office of record or Graves Registration Section was included in the organization of the Quartermaster Staff Sections. Graves Registration Service activities in both army groups were limited to the dissemination of technical information and the rendering of assistance where required to subordinate commanders. The specific responsibilities of both Army Groups as pertained to Graves Registration were as follows:

a. The Quartermaster Sub-Section, 6th Army Group disseminated technical information to armies through field inspections and furnished technical information on Graves Registration activities as directed by the Assistant Chief of Staff G-4.[4]

b. The Quartermaster Section, 12th Army Group maintained constant liaison with Graves Registration agencies of subordinate headquarters in coordinating current plans and directives pertaining to the Graves Registration Service. When necessary, it investigated and made recommendations on technical operations of Quartermaster units engaged in Graves Registration activities.[5]

8. Graves Registration Service, Army. The organization of the Graves Registration Service in each army of the United States forces in the European Theater of Operations was essentially the same as provided in ETO-SOP #26, Burials and Effects, 9 June 1944. The Army Quartermaster was the Chief of the Graves Registration Service in the army area. He fulfilled his responsibilities in Graves Registration matters through the Graves Registration Division, Office of the Army Quartermaster.[6] As Chief of the Graves Registration Service in the army, the Quartermaster was charged with the execution of the following principal Graves Registration Service activities:[6]

a. Control of the technical functions of the Graves Registration Service in the army area, including the employment of Quartermaster Graves Registration companies.

b. Maintenance of the office of record for all Graves Registration matters pertaining to the army.

c. Establishment and operation of cemeteries in the army area; and, when required, the transfer of cemeteries to other commands.

d. Control of evacuation of deceased personnel through the establishment of Graves Registration collecting points.

9. Quartermaster Graves Registration Company. The Quartermaster Graves Registration company constitutes the principal agency through which the Graves Registration Service functioned.[1] The company collects, evacuates and identifies battlefield dead. It collects personal effects and records and forwards them to the Graves Registration Division, Base Depot, in accordance with policy established by the theater commander. It locates and registers battlefield graves and cemeteries and supervises interment. The company

also maintains operational liaison with and furnishes technical assistance to units served.[7]

10. Other Echelons. Each battalion, regiment, division and higher headquarters, as well as hospitals, depots, and other separate installations, and where circumstances made such action desirable, companies, batteries, and other small separate units, appointed a Graves Registration officer (from personnel other than members of the Chaplains Corps) and provided personnel to perform the functions of Quartermaster Graves Registration company personnel in its absence. The responsibilities of unit commanders in Graves Registration Service matters were:[2]

a. To furnish personnel to augment Quartermaster Graves Registration personnel in evacuation of the dead to the cemeteries.

b. To furnish personnel to augment Quartermaster Graves Registration personnel in identifying the dead and digging graves.

c. To perform all Graves Registration activities in the absence of Graves Registration company personnel.

Bibliography

Chapter 1

1. War Department Field Manual, 10-63, Graves Registration, January 1945.

2. ETO-SOP #26, Burials and Effects, 9 June 1944.

3. Notes from Conference, 6 October 1945. Representatives of the Theater Graves Registration Service - Representatives of the Quartermaster, Theater General Board.

4. Comments on the organization of the Quartermaster subsection, 6th Army Group. War Department Observer's Board Report No. 835.

5. Standing Operating Procedure, Quartermaster Section, First United States Army Group, 6 June 1944.

6. Standing Operating Procedures: First, Third, Seventh and Ninth United States Armies, 1944-1945.

7. T/O & E #10-297, 6 November 1943 and T/O & E 10-298, 26 September 1944.

CHAPTER 3

EVACUATION

SECTION 1

ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE

11. Removal of Bodies from Battlefield to Collecting Points.

a. Information obtained toward the middle of the European campaign revealed that there were only minor differences in the methods of evacuation of deceased personnel in the four United States armies. The systems employed followed in principle the doctrines of higher headquarters. The general procedure required combat units to evacuate to a division collecting point with the Graves Registration Service assuming the responsibility at that point.[1] The command responsibility of all echelons for the evacuation of United States, Allied and enemy dead was discharged under the technical supervision of the unit Graves Registration officers. In the zone of combat and harassed areas, unit Graves Registration officers were normally charged with effecting evacuation of the dead from place of death to control points operated by Quartermaster Graves Registration Company personnel.[2] Unburied dead were removed as rapidly as possible. Removal was accomplished in a considerate manner and without confusion in order to sustain the morale of the troops. Normally, bodies were covered, especially if mangled or in an unpresentable condition, while being transported to the cemetery. Routes were prescribed to avoid contact with troops.[3] The following data, comprising a series of representative reports and operating procedures indicate the methods used:

(1) Seventh Army - The operational scheme for the performance of Graves Registration functions was based on the collecting point system of evacuation from the battlefield to the cemetery and required the coordinated employment of Graves Registration personnel and organic collecting details. The collecting details under the supervision of the Assistant Graves Registration Officer evacuated the dead from the battlefield and transported them back to the collecting points. In landing operations the fallen were evacuated directly to the cemetery for burial.[4]

(2) Ninth Army - The remains of United States, Allied and enemy personnel were evacuated in unit transportation to a collecting point operated by Graves Registration personnel or to the army cemetery by the first unit discovering the body.[5]

(3) XIX Corps - To insure expeditious evacuation, each battalion furnished an evacuation team consisting of one enlisted man from each company which evacuated bodies to a regimental collecting point.

Each regiment furnished an evacuation team consisting of two men from each battalion and it removed bodies to the division collecting point.

(4) 45th Infantry Division - Each regiment detailed one officer usually the assistant S-1 as Graves Registration Officer. Each regiment detailed and trained four noncommissioned officers and sixteen privates. They were divided into four teams of one noncommissioned officer and four privates each. One team served each battalion. The fourth team evacuated for the non-battalion units and supplemented the other teams as required. These teams carried the dead to a point, usually on a road near the battalion aid station. The regimental Graves Registration Officer, after having been notified, picked up the dead from the designated location and delivered the remains to the division collecting point established by the army. The appointment of a battalion and company Graves Registration Officer or noncommissioned officer did not work in practice due to battle losses in personnel and rotation of men on this duty.[1]

(5) 30th Infantry Division - The evacuation of the dead was accomplished by units direct to the cemetery until the arrival of the Quartermaster Graves Registration Service platoon which was attached to the division on 27 June 1944. Thereafter division collecting points were set up by the Quartermaster Graves Registration Service platoon.[7]

(6) 79th Infantry Division - Members of the band were used for Graves Registration duty. Regiments delivered the bodies to the division collecting point. Police of the battlefield including United States and enemy dead was a command responsibility.[1]

(7) 6th Armored Division - Each battalion and separate unit appointed a Graves Registration Officer who was responsible for insuring that bodies were evacuated to a rear collecting point. This point was located in the vicinity of the trains area, preferably in the truck park area. This plan was used for the first few days of the campaign in Normandy and Brittany. From the trains area bodies were evacuated to the army cemetery. After the Brittany campaign the realization of the need for evacuating the dead promptly was appreciated. When the division moved into the Nancy area, it was necessary to change the plan of evacuation; and it is believed, by considering all the difficulties encountered, a well worked-out

plan was established. This plan provided a Graves Registration team which was assigned to work with each task force or combat command that went into action. Additional men and transportation were added as needed. Evacuation of the dead was given the highest priority on transportation. Each Graves Registration team worked forward to the advanced service park of the combat command and thereby relieved the battalion Graves Registration teams of long hauls. At the advanced collecting point, identity was established and the bodies were sent to the division rear collecting point where they were rechecked and evacuated to a cemetery nearby. It has been found by experience that it is best to keep a record of every man evacuated. As of 1 November 1944, the Division Graves Registration Section had less difficulty in evacuating the dead than at any previous time. The Battalion Graves Registration Officers did a much better job and, by getting assistance from army, the work became much easier. Army forwarded a five-man team to take the bodies back to the cemetery and to establish identity of each individual. This team had its own transportation and thereby released the division vehicles for some other purpose.

(8) 18th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division - This regiment needed eighteen enlisted men, five for each battalion and three at the regimental supply office, for Graves Registration. The chaplains were in charge of this function for the battalions.[1]

b. In each army, collecting points were established to service army and corps troops. However, evacuation by army and corps troops was frequently direct to cemeteries if conveniently located. The collecting points established by corps served as a point to which corps troops evacuated their dead. Corps collecting points also received the dead from division collecting points, thereby relieving the divisions of the responsibility for evacuating to the cemetery. Army collecting points served primarily army troops and hospital units in the rear of the army area. Evacuation was direct from the army collecting point to the appropriate cemetery.[6]

12. Collection of bodies from division and corps collecting points.

a. With the exception of Third United States Army, the system of operating collecting points was generally the same in all armies and subordinate units. In the Third United States Army normal procedures were followed except in certain cases where methods varied to meet local situations. The method used by Third United States Army in accomplishing the actual phase of collection, combined with evacuation is described as follows: ....The assignment of

a Graves Registration platoon to a division was found to be a waste of personnel. This small unit was inadequately trained, staffed and equipped to properly operate a cemetery. The problem was solved by operating one army cemetery and attaching a small collecting team to each division for the purpose of evacuating to the army cemetery. The team was composed of five men and two 3/4-ton trucks with 1-ton trailers. On good roads these teams could evacuate up to a distance of 150 miles during rapid advances by the army.[9]

b. Representative comments from various other units indicate a closer adherence to the system prescribed in the Standing Operating Procedure of the European Theater of Operations for the employment of the Quartermaster Graves Registration Company in operating collecting points. This procedure prescribed that the Graves Registration Company, with attached labor, would normally be stationed so as to identify and to evacuate from collecting points, insofar as was practicable, all dead to the designated cemeteries.[2] A series of such comments are set forth below:

(1) Seventh Army - Normally, sufficient Graves Registration companies were assigned to an army so that one Graves Registration platoon could be attached to each division or task force. The Graves Registration Officer of the division allocated sections of this platoon to elements of the division as needed to insure proper functioning of the collecting point system.[4]

(2) V Corps (First Army) - Graves Registration platoons were attached to each of the three divisions of the corps for operations only. In addition, a Quartermaster Service Platoon was also "loaned". The two units working together made up Graves Registration teams which handled the collection of all bodies within division areas. The service personnel performed most of the essential labor, thus relieving combat troops of this duty and the Graves Registration personnel at the collecting point were able to complete the processing of the remains.[10]

(3) XIII Corps (Ninth Army) - Each division under the corps was serviced by a platoon of a Graves Registration company which operated division collecting points. Division collecting points and corps troops evacuated to the corps collecting point which was operated by a platoon of a Graves Registration Company.[11]

(4) 30th Infantry Division - Collecting points were established and maintained about two miles in rear of the front. The Quartermaster Graves Registration

Service platoon received, processed and evacuated the dead from these points.[7]

13. Special precautions in handling bodies and neutralizing booby-trapped bodies.

a. Aside from normal precautions taken to preserve identity and to handle the dead with respect, it became apparent early in the European Theater of Operations that extra precautions would have to be taken in the inspection and handling of bodies because of mines and booby-traps. It is believed the subject of booby-trapped bodies and mined areas wherein the dead lay is worthy of special consideration. That we faced an enemy who would resort to booby-trapping the dead was realized early enough to warrant inclusion of the following statement in FM 10-63, Graves Registration: "In the search for bodies great care should be taken to avoid booby-traps and anti-personnel mines which may have been placed under bodies by enemy forces."[3] To implement such instructions, unit Graves Registration officers developed their own methods to counteract the danger involved in the handling of bodies. The following is typical of the means employed by many:

(1) At all times, bodies being picked up on the battlefield should be jerked by a rope at least 200 feet long in order to make sure they are not booby-trapped. We had definite indications of booby-trapping dead bodies with egg and rifle grenades.[12]

(2) Take every possible precaution as the Germans have booby-trapped American dead by attaching hand grenades to the dog tag chains so a pull on the chain will fire the grenade.[13]

b. The procedure was to delay the collection of bodies in an area believed or known to be mined until the area was cleared by personnel trained in mine-clearing operations. The fact that one Graves Registration Company in the European Theater of Operations lost 12 men who set off mines while removing bodies caused certain recommendations for changes in personnel and equipment to be made.[8]

14. Search of the battlefield.

a. The necessity for immediate search of the battlefield, both for the sake of unit morale and with a view toward proper identification, is embodied in instructions which were issued at an early date to Graves Registration units. Unit training included the application of such instructions. The following principles on battlefield search were stressed:

(1) As soon as the area is free from hostile fire, the final and complete systematic search for bodies will be made by Graves Registration Service units assigned to the area. Special precautions will be taken to evacuate bodies, from the company, battalion and regi-

mental aid stations, or the collecting and clearing stations. Careful searches will be made of battlefields to insure that burial of the dead and registration of graves have not been overlooked.[3]

Careful and organized search of a battleground must be made with a view to evacuating all deceased personnel to established burial grounds. Defense against enemy fire involves cover and concealment. The job of searching the battlefield is made difficult by this fact. Every effort must be exercised, however, to evacuate the remains of all deceased soldiers.[14]

b. The importance of prompt and efficient battlefield search is further stressed in the following statement made by a Battalion Graves Registration Officer: "The organizations want the men off the field quickly. The battalion teams are in a position to know the path or area of the operation and know many of the men or know who can identify them."[1]

SECTION 2

DISCUSSION

15. General. Responsibilities for evacuation and collection are placed by doctrines and directives of the War Department and those prepared in the European Theater of Operations. Actual methods for accomplishing evacuation were to a great degree left to commanders concerned. In the absence of any prescribed procedures, there were varying ideas among units as to how the job should be done. At the same time any actual variances in operations were essentially of a minor nature since evacuation of the dead has a single motive, the removal of a body from place of death to a cemetery for burial, and the establishment of identity. Evacuation is divided into two phases. The first phase is concerned with the removal of the body from place of death to the control of Quartermaster Graves Registration elements. The second phase begins when the body passes to the control of Quartermaster Graves Registration elements and ends when it reaches the cemetery. Promptly clearing the battlefield, avoiding lowering the morale of the living, establishing and maintaining identity, and conserving personnel and equipment should be the chief considerations taken into account when devising any plan to accomplish either or both phases.

16. The phase of removal of the body from place of death to control of Quartermaster Graves Registration elements is best accomplished by personnel familiar with the battle area and having knowledge of the units and personnel that operated over the area. The latter is vitally necessary in obtaining the maximum of identifications. For example, the system of employing battalion evacuation teams, as practiced by the 45th Infantry Division, appears to combine the principles desired. Further, it is worthy of remark that this system was employed by a battle-wise organization that had gained much combat

experience prior to the European campaign. Though it is essential that personnel of evacuating teams be familiar with personnel of the units they serve, in a combat unit, the use of personnel from units such as rifle companies can hardly be justified. This is true since there is no task so depressing to a combat soldier as having to clear his dead comrades from the battlefield. To obtain maximum efficiency and avoid undue hardship on the combat soldier, it is believed that evacuating teams should be organized from personnel of regimental or similar organization service elements. In a division, adherence to this plan would avoid the use of personnel from the band or from other division service elements. Such personnel, undoubtedly, could not be used full time for Graves Registration duties because this would interfere with their primary duties. Personnel from the Regimental Service Company are best suited for Graves Registration duty in the regimental area. It is noted that as different divisions gained experience the tendency was toward the plan for evacuation teams to serve in battalion areas, using the same team with the same battalion throughout.

17. The second phase, involving the collection of the dead from the division (or corps) collecting point and evacuation to a cemetery, is a function of the Quartermaster Graves Registration Company. In theory, a Quartermaster Graves Registration Company serves a corps of three divisions. One platoon serves each division and the remaining platoon serves the corps headquarters and corps troops. Each platoon is theoretically able to operate a division cemetery. Division and corps cemeteries were established only in the early phases of the operations in Normandy and Brittany. Later each army operated one or more army cemeteries, usually only one per army. This was possible since road conditions permitted evacuation over longer distances than originally thought possible. Thus a Graves Registration platoon supporting a division found its primary duty that of operating a collecting point and evacuating from the collecting point to the cemetery. The statement of the Graves Registration Officer of Third United States Army that the Graves Registration platoon as organized and used in the European Theater of Operations was inadequately trained, staffed and equipped to operate a cemetery is concurred in. The system used by Third United States Army of employing a small team from army Graves Registration personnel to operate a division collecting point and other small teams to evacuate from such points is believed sound and workable and better than employing an entire platoon for this work. It stands to reason that where one cemetery is operated for an army, it will be a large cemetery and one that will require all Graves Registration personnel available. At least two companies were used to operate some of the large cemeteries established during the European campaign. The use of a plan as adopted by Third United States Army not only tends to save personnel and equipment, but also to localize identification procedures and avoids excess handling of the bodies.

Bibliography

Chapter 3

1. Headquarters ETOUSA, War Department Observer's Board, Subject: AGF Report #496 - Graves Registration, 1 January 1945.

2. ETO SOP No. 26 - Burial and Effects, 9 June 1944.

3. War Department FM 10-63, Graves Registration, January 1945.

4. Quartermaster Logistical Aspects of Operation "Dragoon", a paper prepared by Major John Lappere, QMC, Theater Graves Registration Service, United States Forces, European Theater.

5. Administrative Instructions #4, Hq Ninth U S Army, 24 February 1945.

6. History of the Quartermaster Section of the XIX Corps.

7. Letter, Headquarters 30th Infantry Division, dated 20 July 1944, file 319.1/401 (C), Subject: After Operation Report of Action Against the Enemy.

8. Administrative Orders, First, Third, Seventh and Ninth United States Armies, 1944-1945.

9. Ltr, Headquarters Third U S Army, dated 14 May 1945, subject: "Lessons Learned in Graves Registration from July 31, 1944 to May 9, 1945".

10. Headquarters V Corps, Quartermaster Report - After Action Against The Enemy.

11. Headquarters XIII Corps, After Action Report, dated 1 April 1945, covering period 1-31 March 1945.

12. Battle Experiences #71, Headquarters ETOUSA, 28 February 1945.

13. Battle Experiences #67, Headquarters ETOUSA, 23 February 1945.

14. Handbook for Emergency Battlefield Burials and Graves Registration by Troops, Headquarters SOS, 1 December 1943.

CHAPTER 4

IDENTIFICATION

SECTION 1

PROCEDURE

18. Responsibility. The necessity for positive identification of the dead is to prevent the burying of unknowns and to prevent erroneous identities. The determination of the identity of the dead is a command responsibility. War Department directives charge the Quartermaster Graves Registration Company with both the supervision and execution of procedures connected with the identification of the dead.[1] In providing for the actual execution of command responsibility in connection with identification, unit Graves Registration Officers in the European Theater of Operations were charged with coordinating graves registration activities within the unit concerned to see that personnel were furnished to supplement Quartermaster Graves Registration personnel in identification of the dead.[2] Identification was an important function in all echelons of evacuation, beginning with the collection of identifying media by the Graves Registration personnel who first discovered the body.

19. The extent to which responsible personnel obtained positive identification.

a. The extent to which responsible personnel direct their activities is embodied in the following policy of the European Theater of Operations.

(1) Identification tags and all effects will be left upon the body to be removed by the personnel supervising burial.

(2) An examination will be made by personnel engaged in evacuation, and in those instances where identifying data are not present upon the person of the deceased, such personnel will attempt, through means available, to ascertain identity and place evidence with the body.

(3) If a body is delivered to the collecting point unidentified, every effort will be made, prior to evacuation to cemetery, to have the body viewed by members of the command operating in the area wherein the casualty occurred. Early investigation will often result in identification otherwise unobtainable.[2]

b. The importance of fingerprints in identifying a body cannot be overlooked and this medium was used extensively.[1] The importance of the identification of the wounded was stressed to medical personnel due to the possibility that death might occur during evacuation or

in a medical installation. Medical personnel attached to the Graves Registration company assisted in the establishment of the cause and certainty of death, as well as aiding identification by means of technical inspection and certain notations.[1]

20. Evaluation of means of identification.

a. In order to evaluate the numerous means of identification, the procedure listed by the First United States Army, which produced excellent results, is extracted in substance as follows:

"Identification.....

a. It is essential that all personnel engaged in the collection and evacuation of the dead preserve all evidence of identity. Identification tags and all effects will be kept upon the body.

b. The following are considered to be satisfactory evidence of identity, if no other indications which tend to contradict are observed (variance in clothing markings will not be regarded seriously):

(1) Identification tags worn around neck.

(2) Paybook or pay data card.

(3) An official identification card.

(4) Identification bracelet worn on the wrist.

(5) Emergency Medical tag, in the absence of other evidence; indicating that name, etc., was obtained from the deceased before death.

c. Depending upon circumstances, a combination of two or more of the following may be considered as constituting satisfactory evidence of identity:

(1) Identification tags carried elsewhere than around the neck.

(2) Personal letters or papers.

(3) Motor vehicle operator's permit.

(4) Engraved jewelry.

(5) Clothing marking, particularly on leggings and belt.

d. Whenever the evidence found on the body is not satisfactory, personnel engaged in

evacuation will immediately make every effort to obtain a certificate of identity, signed by at least one but preferably two members of the deceased's unit.

e. If a certificate of identity cannot be obtained, special care must be taken to record any and all information which might assist in establishing identity at a later date. The recorded information should accompany body to place of burial. The following are examples of items of information desired:

(1) The exact place where the body was found.

(2) If found in a vehicle or plane wreck, the names of identified deceased found in the same vehicle.

(3) Serial numbers of arms or other equipment found on or near the body"....[3]

b. Procedures used in other armies and subordinate units generally followed those of First United States Army. The degree to which those responsible for identification followed procedures was reflected in the rate of unknowns buried by a particular unit. As an example of how minutely investigations were conducted to establish the identity of a body, comments made on the subject by the Graves Registration Officer, Third United States Army, are as follows: ...."No one basis of identification was found to be positive. Certificates, signed by officers who proposed to know the deceased, have given erroneous identification, as have identification tags in some cases. A combination of tags, clothing marks, paybook, identification cards, rings or bracelets, all in agreement, generally furnished the correct identity..... Profile and full face portraits of the deceased were made and attached to the check list of unknowns. These pictures were readily recognized by former friends and identification was quickly and positively established. Morticians spent many hours reconstructing the face and removing battle scars to make remains recognizable before pictures were taken by Army Signal Corps photographers. The value of these pictures was definitely established by the large number of identifications made through their use. Morticians were found to be indispensable in the process of establishing identity. Their knowledge of the human body enabled them to make estimates of physical characteristics that would have been impossible for a layman. Through the use of materials such as cosmetic wax, needles, and instruments or field expedients, they prepared the bodies for pictures and secured clues which would have been overlooked by inexperienced personnel. They took great pride in their work and, despite advanced decomposition and sickening odors in many cases, recorded all possible clues upon which identity might be based.....personal effects were minutely described on the report of burial. They were sent to units for examination as aids to establishing identity. Even items

of no intrinsic worth such as razor blades, peculiar buttons and photographs were saved. Reports of Burial of crew members were always cross-referenced to facilitate investigations.... Reports of burial of remains found without identification tags were carefully checked against battle casualty records to determine accuracy of the spelling of the name, rank, serial number, date of death, unit assignment, casualty status, and religion.... the basis upon which identity could be established. Reliance was not placed on any one factor. All clues were recorded. This procedure not only resulted in establishing identifications rapidly but it also resulted in positive identifications".....

21. Where bodies could not be identified immediately, the following procedures governed:

a. Group burials.

(1) In cases of group casualties, either airplane crashes or burned tanks, with individual identities completely lost and where only group identities could be determined by organizational lists showing the crew complement of the airplane or tank at the take-off or commencement of action, at times it was possible to separate and preserve the individual remains of one or more and, in some instances, all members of the crew. When identification tags or other positive means of identification are found upon the individual remains, the particular case offers no complication or doubt as to identity and the remains will be buried in the prescribed manner. When individual cases have all evidence of identification completely destroyed by fire or otherwise, these bodies should be definitely marked Unknown X-6, X-7 etc., the number assigned to the first body being the next serial number to the last unknown X (Number), deceased already buried in the cemetery where the remains are to be interred. The graves likewise will be so marked that the remains will have a definite grave location. The importance of obtaining fingerprints and definitely affixing the proper X (Number) to the remains, with name of cemetery and grave location noted on the report of burial will permit further identification research by the Office of The Quartermaster General with some possibility of eventually determining identity.

(2) In cases where the remains of a crew or a certain number of its members are so consumed by fire, torn apart and scattered by explosive action, or mingled together so as to prevent segregation of individual remains, a skull with anatomical parts adhering to it which

can positively be established as part of an individual remains should be regarded as an individual case and buried in a separate grave. These graves will be marked and recorded as Unknown X (Number), the number assigned being in accordance with the method prescribed above. Subsequent exhumation for identification will permit, in many cases, preparation of complete tooth charts which should give some assurance of conclusive identifications.

(3) In instances where it is absolutely impossible to segregate bodies in whole, or in part, offering no possibility of later identification, all recoverable remains will be gathered and buried in a single grave. The burial record will show the action taken and the names of the crew complement, if available. All identifying numbers on the airplane or tank, if available, should also be recorded. The same information will be recorded on the graves marked by embossed plates and will also be placed on the burial record.

b. Individual unknowns.

(1) Unknowns, such as water casualties eventually washed ashore, where all positive evidence of identification has been lost due to prolonged immersion, decomposition and other causes, should when recovered be given an X (Number) designation in accordance with instructions contained above.

(2) In those cases where the complete dental chart can be obtained without mutilation of the jaws, this should be accomplished and a copy of the chart submitted to The Quartermaster General, together with such other information as to designation of organization in action in this particular area at possible time of death, and other pertinent facts that might offer clues to identify.[1]

22. Identification of Allied and enemy dead. It is the responsibility of the Graves Registration Service, when circumstances of war make it necessary, to care for Allied and enemy dead. The normal method of establishing proper identity of Allied and enemy dead was the same as that for our own dead.[2] Documents found on enemy dead were disposed of in accordance with regulations dealing with documents found on the enemy.[1]

SECTION 2

REPORTS AND RECORDS

23. Necessity for accuracy and completeness.

a. Reports of burials, both identified and unidentified, are required not only as a normal administrative function of a Graves Registration unit, but also to aid the Adjutant General in determining the correct status of all casualties. Records covering the burial of identified and unidentified bodies are necessary:

(1) To provide the War Department with a record of grave locations and identification of each remains in order that the next of kin may be notified.

(2) To allow for the final accounting of all administrative matters pertaining to the deceased (insurance, final pay due, effects, etc.).

(3) To enable the Graves Registration Service to ascertain, through ratio of one to the other, whether the most efficient methods of identification are being employed.

b. Accuracy and completeness are of prime importance in the maintenance of Graves Registration Service records due to the nature of the mission of the Service and its effect upon morale, both at the front and at home.[1]

24. Graves Registration Service Form #1, Report of Burial, for identification purposes. Graves Registration Service Form #1 is prepared by the Graves Registration Service having jurisdiction for each burial performed by American forces outside the continental United States. The report is verified as to completeness and accuracy, and no change or addition is accepted unless initialed by the officer signing the report.[6] In the European Theater of Operations the form was found to be generally adequate in serving its purpose. The following comments indicate the general use made of these reports: "An adequate filing system was devised which safeguarded the burial reports from excessive wear and damage and also which recorded all information that passed through the office concerning any one name. Reports of Burial were securely bound, alphabetically, by cemetery .... reports of burial of remains found without identification tags were carefully checked against battle casualty records to determine accuracy of the spelling of the name, rank, serial number, date of death, unit assignment, casualty status, and religion".....[5] Graves Registration Form #1 was superseded by War Department QMC Form 1042 on 1 April 1945; however, the new form was not released in time to be used in the European Theater of Operations. The new report of burial is an improvement on the old form in that it allows for greater detail in the recording of clues for the future identity of unidentified remains.[8]

25. Visual Identification Certificates. When evidence found on a body was not satisfactory for identification, an effort was made to immediately obtain a certificate of identity signed by at least one but preferably two members of the deceased's unit.[7] The form of the cer-

tificate used was substantially the same in all commands, setting forth the identity of the deceased and the basis for making identification either through personal acquaintance or other means. However, experience has shown that no one basis of identification has been found to be positive. Certificates, signed by officers who professed to know the deceased, have given erroneous identifications.[5] The possibility of improving on the general form of the certificate of identity used in visual identification is questionable since the accuracy of the report is predicated, for the most part, on the reliability of the testimony of the person making the identification. Impressing the identifier with the necessity of being positive in his identification would probably be the only means of improving the efficiency of this certificate.

26. Emergency Medical Tag, War Department MD Form 52b. In identification, the emergency medical tag is a valuable source of information. The tag is made out by the first member of the Medical Department who finds or examines a deceased or wounded person. It is of value to the Graves Registration Service since it gives information regarding the details of death and furnishes formal evidence of death. Burial parties are instructed that remains will not be buried unless death is obvious from its condition and a qualified member of the Medical Corps has prepared an emergency medical tag and stated thereon that the individual is definitely dead. The emergency medical tag attached to the remains is removed at the time of interment either by the Medical Department representative or by a responsible member of the burial party. The tag is then forwarded in either case direct to the Chief Surgeon, European Theater of Operations, who transmits it after use in his office to the Surgeon General. Carbon copies of the emergency medical tag are assembled and utilized by the senior medical officer of each unit to prepare for the organization commander a daily list of casualties as may be required in preparing or checking his reports.[1]

27. Battle Casualty Reports. Battle Casualty Reports are rendered by all units in a command to provide the War Department with complete and accurate data regarding casualties which occur as a result of enemy action. The Army Machine Records Unit maintains a set of casualty cards from which any type of casualty statistics or tabulations, based on the information contained in the Battle Casualty Report, can be quickly reproduced on request. A reproduced set of Battle Casualty cards is forwarded daily to each Corps Machine Records Unit for the purpose of furnishing casualty data requested by organizations serviced by that Machine Records Unit. Examples of the actual use of Battle Casualty Reports are contained in the following comments of the 45th Infantry Division: "Regimental trained teams operated with each battalion and under the supervision of the Assistant Regimental S-1 who was record conscious and in close contact with the various Personnel Sections. All records on the unidentified dead were quickly made out and checked with Battle Casualty Reports."[4] The Graves Registration Division of the Office of the Army Quartermaster operated closely with both the Casualty Section of the Office of the Army Adjutant General and the Army Machine Records Unit to avoid erroneous identifications. If identity was not positively established by information contained in the Report of

Burial, a search was made for a corresponding Battle Casualty Report. In other cases, identification was confirmed by comparing the physical description of the deceased in the Report of Burial with that found in the Service Record when it was processed by the Adjutant General.[5]

SECTION 3

DISCUSSION

28. General. Efforts to establish identity begin with an examination of the evidence found on the body and continue through examination and matching of records, reports, descriptions and through a process of elimination. No standard operating procedures can be followed. Results attained in establishing positive identities are in proportion to the amount of effort expended and the thoroughness and accuracy of effort. The fact that no one basis of identification was found to be positive and that identity can be established by numerous means preclude the prescribing of a strict procedure which would undoubtedly tend to limit the degree to which personnel engaged in identification can go.

29. Reduction of rate of unknowns. The reduction of rate of unknowns buried can best be accomplished by thorough training of Graves Registration personnel in judging the value of clues to identification, the proper handling of bodies to prevent destroying clues and necessity for continuing efforts to establish identity. As no strict procedures, other than those to be followed logically, can be set for establishing positive identity, there can likewise be no definite figure as to what the ratio of unknowns buried should be. It has been emphasized that efforts to establish positive identity do not cease when a body is buried but continue indefinitely through the process of examining effects, service records, reports of burial, crew complement lists, interrogation of persons having knowledge of the circumstances of death, and through the process of elimination. It is believed the individual soldier can be made identity-conscious by means of tactful and non-fatalistic instructions on the subject. Such instructions should emphasize the need for positive identification from the morale and administrative viewpoint. All personnel should be cautioned never to remove identification tags and effects from the dead unless authorized to do so. Cases have been discovered where soldiers removed identification tags from dead comrades with the idea of turning them in to the unit headquarters as proof of death.

Bibliography

Chapter 4

1. War Department FM 10-63, January 1945.

2. ETO SOP #26 - Burials & Effects, 9 June 1945.

3. First US Army Circular #22, 18 February 1945.

4. Letter, Hq ETO War Department Observers Board, dated 1 January 1945, Subj: "AGF Report #496 - Graves Registration".

5. Letter, Hq Third US Army, Subj: "Lessons Learned in Graves Registration from July 31, 1944 to May 9, 1945", dated 14 May 1945.

6. AR 30-1815.

7. Memo No. 31, Hq Fifteenth US Army, 27 March 1945.

8. Notes from Conference, 6 October 1945, Representatives of the Theater Graves Registration Service - Representatives of the Quartermaster, Theater General Board.

CHAPTER 5

BURIALS

SECTION 1

CEMETERIES

30. Principles.

a. Each army in the European Theater of Operations was guided by the same general principles in the selection of sites and establishment of cemeteries. They were as follows:[1]

(1) Cemeteries should be screened from hostile ground observation and located beyond the range of hostile artillery.

(2) They should be located in open fields where the soil is well drained and easy to dig.

(3) They should be served by a good road net.

(4) Avoid the selection of swampy ground or ground underlaid with rocks.

(5) Avoid sites near the bank of streams.

(6) Sites should interfere as little as possible with the use of adjoining land, and where there is a choice of land the poorer quality should be selected.

(7) Other factors being favorable, cemeteries should be located in places convenient to sectors where the heaviest fighting and casualties are expected.

(8) Avoid locating cemeteries near location or bivouac of combat troops or reinforcements or along side of roads travelled by troops.

b. In laying out cemeteries the standard plan furnished by the Quartermaster General was used only as a guide. Departures from the plan were made to conform to physical features, roads, property boundaries and local conditions. The Third and Ninth U S Armies conformed to the 300 grave plot plan, First U S Army used a 200 grave plot plan, and Seventh U S Army used the 144 grave plot plan. The 200, 300 and 1200 grave plots were found to be too large. The 144 grave plot was more suitable. Once a cemetery was established and burials begun therein, neither the plan nor the numbering of graves was changed except by authority of the Chief, Graves Registration Service, European Theater of Operations.[2] Separate plots in United States cemeteries were designated for:

(1) All individuals subject to military law

such as United States Army, United States Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, American Red Cross, accredited correspondents, technical observers.

(2) Allied dead.

(3) Enemy dead.

(4) Deceased deserters and general prisoners.[3]

c. Early experiences in the European Theater of Operations demonstrated the desirability of establishing a minimum number of cemeteries in an army area. Normally each army operated one cemetery. The Graves Registration Officer, Third U S Army, stated the principle that under normal conditions only one cemetery should be established for all army, corps and division troops, and that new cemeteries were required when the line of evacuation exceeded 100 miles.[4] Fifteenth U S Army, profiting from the experiences of other armies, established the policy that only one cemetery would be in operation within the army boundaries at any one time and the cemetery would be established and operated by army.[5]

31. Operations.

a. The handling of bodies is a function of the Quartermaster Graves Registration Company, which is charged with the supervision of the burial of the dead, the preparation of burial reports and plotting of locations and registration of graves and cemeteries.[3] During burial operations, the following principles were considered:

(1) Proper recording of burial showing name, grade, organization, date of death and burial, and location of grave.

(2) Sanitary protection in the battle area. In some instances conditions demanded expeditious burials. Medical inspectors exercised sanitary supervision of the burial of the dead.

(3) Morale of the organizations. The dead were removed as quickly as possible from sight. The removals and burials were conducted with due reverence. Military honors were rendered wherever possible.

(4) Morale of the home population. Consideration demanded that the relatives and friends at home who are to be advised of the deaths should have assurance that the remains were reverently and properly interred.

These considerations are embodied in the basic War Department doctrine on Graves Registration.[1]

b. The procedure of interment as normally followed by each army required that after each body had been

identified or made ready for interment it was wrapped in a blanket, mattress covers, or shelter-half and fastened securely with safety pins.[1] A report from Third U S Army gives a picture of the processing procedure at a cemetery as follows: .... "A processing area with a hard surface and an overhead cover for protection against rain was constructed. Cement, from a sanitary viewpoint, was the best surface used because it was easy to clean. A morgue was also prepared, either in a closed off portion of the processing area or in a separate building. The remains of all unidentified bodies were processed there by experienced morticians. Heat, adequate light, surgical instruments, fingerprinting sets, and other apparatus were made available. Two morticians worked on unknowns in this building, acquiring experience which enabled them to submit thorough and comprehensive reports which later simplified the problems of establishing identity" ....[4] Various Graves Registration Companies had minor deviations in the method of handling of bodies at cemeteries, however, all operated an "assembly line" process with each man assigned a specific job. They could process normally 500 bodies daily.[7]

c. Labor required in connection with the burial of the dead was secured from the following sources:[3]

(1) Prisoners of War, when not nearer than twelve miles of the front.

(2) Civilians.

(3) Quartermaster Service Companies.

(4) Combat troops when other labor was not available.

Third U S Army reported that Quartermaster Service Companies were attached to the Graves Registration Companies operating the cemeteries and provided all labor requirements. Prisoners of War were used to supplement the Quartermaster Service Companies, but due to their rapid turnover they were only used for digging graves. Civilian labor was found to be inefficient and difficult to control.[4] While the need for adequate labor in cemetery operations under normal conditions is obvious, the following report, on labor for Graves Registration activities in an assault landing, provides information of interest... "A Railhead Company and a Service Company were sent to the cemeteries to begin the collection of bodies and the digging of graves. These companies were continued on this service until D + 5 at which time prisoner labor was furnished by the Engineer Special Brigade. This Corps makes the following recommendation: The importance of providing adequate Quartermaster Service personnel in any operation against the enemy cannot be over-emphasized. In "Neptune", two Graves Registration platoons and one Service Company, landing early on D + 1 would have materially alleviated the confusion on the beaches from many scattered bodies and abandoned equipment."[6]

d. In the European Theater of Operations supplies used by the Graves Registration Service were stocked in Quartermaster Class II & IV Depots. Credits, based on

troop strengths and anticipated casualties, were established by the Office of the Chief Quartermaster for each army and the Communications Zone sections. Actually credits did not limit the quantity of Graves Registration supplies that a command could draw, but served more as a basis for editing the various requisitions in the depot. In early operations Graves Registration supplies were included on the daily telegram. Later they were drawn by requisition. The periodic requisitioning procedure was established by the Office of the Chief Quartermaster and is outlined as follows:

(1) Requisitions from armies and forward echelons of Communications Zone for Graves Registration and Effects supplies will be submitted through technical channels to the Office of Chief Quartermaster, on a 20-day basis to arrive at this office not more than seven nor less than five days prior to effective date of requisitions. Emergency requisitions may be submitted at any time to cover unforeseen operational requirements, and will be clearly marked "Emergency Requisition". Emergency requisitions will be kept to the minimum.

(2) Mattress covers should not be included in the 20-day requirement requisition but should be submitted on the regular Class II requisition. Quantities of mattress covers requisitioned for Graves Registration purposes should be indicated by initials "GR&E", so that during the process of editing requirements for mattress covers, no cut will be made in mattress covers required for Graves Registration purposes.

(3) Units in rear areas will submit requisitions through the Office of the Chief Quartermaster for cemetery requirements as needed.

(4) Graves Registration and Effects supplies are strictly controlled items and all requisitions will be edited and approved by the Office of the Chief Quartermaster before issues can be made by depots storing such supplies.

(5) Section and Base Section Quartermasters will be responsible for furnishing supplies necessary for the beautification and maintenance of cemeteries within their respective sections including fencing materials, tools, equipment, shrubs, grass seed, trees and other supplies pertaining to cemetery operations.

32. Care and beautification. In October 1944, Headquarters European Theater of Operations established a definite policy governing the care and maintenance of

World War II cemeteries on the Continent. Prior to this time there had been neither time nor facilities to accomplish more than normal police and simple landscaping. This policy is summarized as follows:

a. The Chief Quartermaster, European Theater of Operations, was responsible for the determination of policies for the care, beautification and preservation of all cemeteries established by the United States forces during the current war. Policing and beautification were to begin as soon as practicable after cemeteries were turned over to Communications Zone control by armies. Communications Zone sections were responsible for actual operations and provided labor and material. Technical supervision, however, was exercised by Graves Registration personnel. The Chief Quartermaster was responsible for periodic inspections as deemed necessary to insure that all cemeteries were properly beautified and maintained and that prescribed limitations were not exceeded.[10]

b. Prisoner of War and civilian labor was used to beautify cemeteries. As soon as practicable after beautification work was completed, cemeteries closed to further burials were staffed by qualified civilian caretakers. In those remaining open to further burials, military personnel were to be reduced to the minimum required to handle burials.[10]

c. Only supplies available in the European Theater of Operations were used in beautification work. Beautification work was aimed at making each cemetery a scene of simple and reverent beauty. No elaborate or permanent type improvements or construction were undertaken until the cessation of hostilities. Each army performed limited beautification work. The following are comments by the Graves Registration Officer, Third U S Army: ..."Beautification of cemeteries was started the day they were opened. Not only was the morale of the Graves Registration personnel improved, but also that of soldiers visiting the graves of friends. Flag poles, prayer rostrums, fences, shrubbery, good roads, and well painted crosses were installed. The area was meticulously policed and cemetery apparatus and tools were placed out of sight as much as possible"....[4]

33. Records and Reports.

a. Graves Registration Form #1, Report of Burial, was discussed in connection with identification. It is discussed here as a record of burial. A Report of Burial is prepared by the Graves Registration Service having jurisdiction for each burial performed by American forces outside the continental United States. Great care is taken in the preparation of this report as it is the sole record of the War Department of grave location and identification of each remains. Each report is verified as to completeness and accuracy, and no change or addition is made unless initialed by the officer signing the report.[14] In the European Theater of Operations the officer or other person in charge of the burial detail signed each copy of the report and the Army Graves Registration Officer verified its accuracy. Reports of Burial were required in quadruplicate for all United States dead.

Two copies were forwarded to the Office of the Chief Quartermaster.[3] One copy was kept at the cemetery and one copy forwarded through the Army Graves Registration Officer to the commanding officer of the deceased's unit. However, all armies in the European Theater of Operations required an additional copy for the file of the Army Graves Registration Officer.[11] The information listed below, required to be recorded on the Report of Burial, was waived for the European Theater of Operations:

(1) The name and address of emergency addressees as recorded on the older type of identification tag.

(2) The listing of personal effects found on the body and disposition of same, except in those cases where positive identification was not made prior to burial.[12]

b. Graves Registration Form #2, Weekly Burial Report, was prepared in quadruplicate and three copies forwarded through the same channels as Graves Registration Form #1. It showed the number of interments that had been made in a particular plot of the cemetery. The Weekly Burial Report is used for a check against the records to see that a Report of Burial has been received for all burials during the particular period.[6]

c. Standing Operating Procedure of the European Theater of Operations stipulated that Graves Registration Officers of major commands were to maintain records as they deemed necessary to exercise effective control of graves registration matters within their respective areas, and that personnel charged with the maintenance of cemeteries were to maintain complete records of burial of the dead within each cemetery.[3] Accordingly, all armies directed that four additional reports be prepared as follows:

(1) Daily Cemetery Report: Rendered daily in a form prescribed by the Army Graves Registration Officer, which was usually similar to the Weekly Burial Report and covered interments for each 24-hour period. One copy was forwarded to the Army Graves Registration Officer, and one copy was filed with the records of the cemetery.[13]

(2) Cemetery Register: Record was maintained, usually in triplicate, for each cemetery. It indicated the identity and grave location of each deceased. The original formed a part of the cemetery records, and the remaining copies were forwarded to the Army Graves Registration Officer.[13]

(3) Locator Card File: On 3" x 5" index cards were typed the name, rank, army serial number, organization, date of burial, plot, and row and grave number

of each body buried in the cemetery. These cards were filed in alphabetical order by last name of dead. They were used in answering inquiries of visitors and in routine cemetery administration. The use of this locator file saved wear and tear on Reports of Burial and other records.

d. Records and Reports for Allied dead: Reports of the burial of Allied dead by United States burial officers were prepared and forwarded the same as those covering the burial of United States personnel, however, the deceased's commanding officer was not furnished a copy of the Report of Burial, but instead that copy was directed to the Chief Quartermaster, European Theater of Operations, for eventual transmittal to the office in charge of graves registration for the appropriate Allied government. One additional copy was also placed in the package containing the deceased's effects.[3]

e. Handling of Records of Unknowns: In the case of unidentified bodies, data called for on the reverse side of the Report of Burial was entered as completely as possible. Additional sheets were used if needed. The unknown's grave was identified by an X-number and the number entered on the Report of Burial as well as all other records of the cemetery.[11]

SECTION 2

HASTY AND ISOLATED BURIALS, INCLUDING DISINTERMENTS AND REBURIALS

34. Definitions.

a. An isolated burial is a military burial made in accordance with prescribed procedure, but not in a temporary cemetery. In the European Theater of Operations less than 25 graves were considered isolated burials. Twenty-five or more graves were considered a temporary cemetery.[3]

b. A hasty burial is a temporary burial made on the battlefield under circumstances which at the time prevent following prescribed procedure for burials.[1]

c. Disinterment is the process of removing a body from a grave.[1]

d. Reburial is the process of placing a body in a new grave after it has been disinterred from an old one.[1]

35. When and by whom performed.

a. At times hasty burials may be imperative for sanitary reasons and for preserving morale. There is not time to remove personal effects or to verify and dispose of identification tags. A stick or large rock, or a bayonet with a helmet superimposed is used to indicate the grave. There are no records of burial or grave locations, but the spot must be marked so that it can be located later.

Time does not permit fixed grave depths, spacing or alignment. It should be understood that graves registration personnel or other units will later disinter these hasty burials made during the continental campaign when enemy action prevented evacuation of the dead. They were made in most instances by order of unit or higher commanders and usually by burial parties not equipped with the prescribed reports and forms or grave markers.

b. Isolated burials were made in rare cases where the dead could not be evacuated to collecting points or cemeteries. A majority of the isolated burials of United States personnel were performed by civilians. Burials were usually in local church yards, cemeteries or in fields. First U S Army prescribed that when evacuation was impossible burials would be made near the place of death by a burial officer with the necessary detail of troops. The burial officer was made responsible for the identification of the deceased, preparation of Report of Burial, inventory and disposition of effects found on the body, burial in a suitable grave, marking the grave, and forwarding the Report of Burial, Inventory of Effects, and Emergency Medical Tags.[15] Procedures and responsibilities established in other armies generally followed those of First U S Army.

36. Disinterments and Reburials.

a. Standing Operating Procedure of the European Theater of Operations provided that burial grounds in which interment of 25 or more bodies had been made would be designated as temporary cemeteries. Disinterments from these temporary cemeteries would not be made unless specifically authorized by the Chief, Graves Registration Service, European Theater of Operations. All burials of 24 or less graves were to be considered as isolated burials, and disinterment and transfer of these bodies to a designated temporary cemetery was mandatory.[3] The German Army apparently had no policy which definitely required units to concentrate burials. Many isolated German graves existed in the areas overrun by the United States Armies. The following European Theater Headquarters policy governed the disinterment and reburial of enemy dead: .... "Isolated graves of enemy deceased have probably been registered by the enemy" ... disinterments of enemy deceased for purposes of concentration of remains in cemeteries may result in difficulties of identification and location of grave at a later date. Accordingly, the burial of enemy remains should be confined to any unburied remains except where, for operational reasons, it is considered necessary to disinter isolated burials."[16]

b. Each army, in general, followed the same procedure in recording, reporting, disintering and reburying isolated remains. The following procedure used by First U S Army is an example:

> ".....Reporting and disinterment of isolated graves.
>
> (1) Any person finding an isolated grave, American, Allied, or enemy, which

apparently has not been registered will report its exact location to the nearest unit graves registration officer. The Unit Graves Registration Officer will inspect the grave and forward the report, including all available details, directly to the commanding officer of the nearest graves registration unit, who will register the grave and forward the report to the Army Graves Registration Officer.

(2) The same general procedure will be followed whenever an Allied or enemy military cemetery is found in newly occupied territory.

(3) No graves will be disinterred except upon instructions from the Army Graves Registration Officer.

(4) These instructions do not apply to cases of hasty burials. They will be similarly reported, but the nearest graves registration officer will arrange for evacuation or isolated burial, according to circumstances.

(5) Burials made in civilian church yards or cemeteries, by either military or civilian personnel, will be considered and reported as isolated burials or graves".[15]

In each army, reburials were reported on Graves Registration Form #1, Report of Burial, through channels in the same manner prescribed for normal burials. The designation "Reburial", was clearly indicated on each copy. The Weekly Burial Report, Graves Registration Form #2, as well as the Daily Cemetery Report submitted by the officer in charge of the cemetery, included reburials. Reburials are also entered on the cemetery register. If disinterment and reburial were effected at the same cemetery, as in the case of an unknown later identified, careful check was made to determine that the entry was clearly indicated to avoid a duplication of grave location.

37. Sweeping areas.

a. All personnel were charged with reporting the location of graves discovered with no indication of registration by Graves Registration Company personnel. During lulls in combat, the Quartermaster Graves Registration Company carefully searched the battlefield for unburied or unsuitably buried dead and isolated and unmarked graves.[3] Of necessity, there were usually many factors which prevented a thorough sweep of the combat zone by the field forces and it was the responsibility of the Communications Zone section, taking over the area, to institute a complete search. Graves Registration Service personnel in Communications Zone conducted these sweeping operations. Additional labor was furnished from military personnel, civilians, or prisoners of war.

b. The principle sources of information on isolated burials were as follows:[17]

(1) German burial reports.

(2) Missing air crew reports.

(3) Service des Sepulchures Militaires. (Official French Government organization comparable to American Graves Registration Service, which in cooperation with Headquarters, European Theater of Operations, circularized all political sub-divisions of France.)

(4) Prisoner of War Information Bureau (copies of all questionnaires filled in by released American prisoners, and which gave information as to potential burials. They were filed in the Office of the Chief Quartermaster, European Theater of Operations.)

(5) Organized search of areas by Graves Registration teams. The searching teams proceeded systematically, contacting all village burgomeisters, clergy, police, cemetery caretakers and local government officials in an effort to locate any United States isolated graves and unburied remains. In sparsely settled areas, physical search was made of known battlefields and inquiries made of the inhabitents.

(6) Reports from individuals and organizations of the Field Forces.

(7) Reports received from the American and International Red Cross.

(8) Reports received as a result of the projects initiated through the Church of France, whereby the priests of local parishes solicited information in their parishes.

(9) Reports received by American Embassies from various individuals or organizations, and transmitted to the Graves Registration Service.

In France 60% of the records of isolated burials were submitted as a result of the activity of the Service des Sepulchures Militaires, 30% were obtained from searching operations conducted in the Normandy and Seine Sections of Communications Zone by Graves Registration Units, while the remaining 10% were furnished by other sources. In Belgium and Holland, approximately 20% of the records were furnished by civilian authorities, 20% by the British, 10% from captured documents, 45% through investigations conducted by Graves Registration Service personnel, and 5% by other sources. In Germany, as well as in Austria and

Czechoslovakia, 90% of the records came originally from captured German documents which were later substantiated and added to by reports from United States troops, Graves Registration Service investigations, G-5, and British sources.

38. Graves Registration Service in the handling of atrocity cases. When the Allied armies entered Germany and began to discover atrocity cases, it became apparent that the help of the Graves Registration Service would be required. In April 1945, the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Forces, directed that immediate steps be taken to cause decent and reverent burial of all persons of all nationalities within his area who were victims of atrocities committed by the Germans. It was directed that the civilian population of nearby communities attend the burials. German males, irrespective of their status in life, were used for grave digging, interment of bodies, disinterment of mass graves, reburials, and cemetery upkeep. Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jewish Chaplains were used, if available, in each consecration and burial. No Allied military personnel, other than chaplains, were used except in a supervisory capacity.[18] The Quartermaste Graves Registration Companies assigned to the various armies were used extensively in supervisory work. Further, the Graves Registration Service notified persons investigating War Crimes where the discovery of remains gave evidence that the individual may have died as a result of an atrocity. In the event the War Crimes investigator desired to examine any papers or personal effects of the deceased, they were turned over to the investigator and a receipt taken therefor. To aid War Crimes personnel in their work, the facilities of the Graves Registration Service were placed at their disposal by all commanders.

SECTION 3

DISCUSSION

39. Cemeteries.

a. Information available prior to D-Day on the mission of the Graves Registration Company in connection with cemetery operations was limited to that contained in several obsolete publications based on World War I experiences plus a limited amount of information from the North African and Italian Campaigns. It was not until after D-Day that FM 10-63, Graves Registration, and ETO-SOP #26, Burials and Effects, were published. The limited amount of information available prior to D-Day caused each army to develop its own methods, which generally followed the same procedures in cemetery operation. It cannot be stated that one army had a better system than another. The differences in grave plot plans is the only noticeable one in overall cemetery operations. This difference can be attributed to the lack of Graves Registration liaison between armies. The 144-grave plot turned out to be more suitable in that its records could be more easily accounted for. With a smaller plot there was a smaller margin of error in original layout. Final alignment of markers and grave location was easier.

b. FM 10-63 and ETO-SOP #26 both specified that a separate area within the cemetery be used for burial of enemy dead. Two armies established separate enemy cemeteries. This decreased the possibility of burying enemy deceased in American and Allied plots. Separate cemeteries facilitate beautification and the turnover of enemy plots after cessation of hostilities for the reason that negotiations will likely be concerned only with separate and distinct lots of land.

40. Isolated burials. After cessation of hostilities the problem of isolated burials becomes one of magnitude. There was an estimated 20,000 United States deceased scattered over Europe when the campaign ended. They must all be located, identified and transferred to United States cemeteries in Allied countries. This figure would undoubtedly have been lower had area searching and disinterment teams been assigned to Communications Zone in the early phases of the European campaign. Teams should have been assigned in quantities and at intervals corresponding to the gradual increase in the size of the Communications Zone area. These teams would have released more Graves Registration Companies for performance of their mission in the combat zone.

Bibliography

Chapter 5

1. War Department FM 10-63, dated January 1945.

2. "Analysis of Quartermaster Operational Experience, Graves Registration and Effects Operations", a paper prepared by HQ, US THEATER GRAVES REGISTRATION SERVICE, THEATER SERVICE FORCES, EUROPEAN THEATER.

3. ETO-SOP #28, Burials and Effects.

4. Letter, Hq Third US Army, dated 14 May 1945, Subj: "Lessons Learned in Graves Registration from July 31, 1944 to May 9, 1945."

5. Memo #31, Hq Fifteenth US Army, dated 27 March 1945.

6. QM Report Operation Neptune, - After Action Against the Enemy, Hq V Corps.

7. SOP of the 607th QM Graves Registration Company.

8. Hq Fifteenth US Army Circular #1, 26 March 1945.

9. Circular Letter #5, Com Z, ETOUSA, OCQM, dated 12 January 1945, Subj: "Quartermaster Graves Registration and Effects Division".

10. Letter, Hq ETOUSA, dated 11 October 1944, Subj: "Beautification and Maintenance of World War II Cemeteries".

11. SOP's on Graves Registration, First, Third, Seventh, Ninth and Fifteenth US Armies.

12. Letter, Hq ETOUSA, 24 August 1944, Subj: "Preparation of Reports of Burial".

13. Administrative Circulars, First, Third, Seventh, Ninth, and Fifteenth US Armies.

14. AR 30-1815.

15. Cir #22, 18 February 1945. Hq First US Army.

16. Letter, Hq ETOUSA, AG 29 3-OPQM, 18 April 1945, Subj: "Burial of Military Personnel".

17. A file entitled "Basic Plans and Policies of American GRS, European and Mediterranean Area", 12 September 1945, US THEATER GRAVES REGISTRATION SERVICE, THEATER SERVICE FORCES, EUROPEAN THEATER.

18. 12th Army Group TWX QX-29401, 21 April 1945, to Commanding Generals, First, Third, Ninth and Fifteenth US Armies.

CHAPTER 6

PERSONAL EFFECTS

SECTION 1

COLLECTION AND DOCUMENTATION

41. Definition of responsibilities. All effects found on remains of deceased personnel will be regarded as personal effects. Personal effects are removed from the body at time of burial, and listed on the Report of Burial, Graves Registration Form #1. The War Department places the responsibility for the shipment of personal effects on unit Graves Registration Officers.[1] In the European Theater of Operations the responsibilities and procedures for handling of personal effects were outlined in Standing Operating Procedure.[2]

42. Action taken on battlefield. In battlefield or hasty burials, the officer in charge of the burial party assembles all available personal effects, makes an inventory of same and forwards them, through prescribed channels, to the Effects Quartermaster, Communications Zone. No funds found on United States or Allied remains are inclosed in the personal effects container, but are turned in to the Finance Department. In the case of remains evacuated to a collecting point or to a cemetery, the responsible officer or noncommissioned officer in charge of the searching party insures that no personal effects are removed from the body. When the personal effects of an enemy deceased are turned over to an intelligence officer, that officer is responsible for their protection and disposal.[2]

43. Action taken at the cemetery. The officer in charge of the cemetery is responsible for the assembling and inventorying of all personal effects found on remains. Except for funds found on United States and Allied dead, he forwards all personal effects through prescribed channels to the Effects Quartermaster, Communications Zone.

44. Action taken at Hospitals. The personal effects of personnel who die after having been removed to hospitals are disposed of by the Medical Department. The commanding officer of the hospital is responsible for their collection, inventory, protection and disposition at the hospital. The personal effects of individuals who die in a hospital or who are dead on arrival may accompany the body to the cemetery or collecting point, where receipt will be given.[2]

45. Action taken in each organization. The commanding officer of a deceased's organization is responsible for the collection, inventory and security of all effects located in bivouac areas, billets or rest areas. He separates government issue property from the effects and turns it in as salvage. He permits the legal representative or surviving spouse of the deceased, if present, to take possession of the remainder of the effects. When disposition cannot be made in this manner, the responsible officer:[2]

a. Assembles all available effects.

b. Separates all effects such as wearing apparel, personal jewelry, watches, rings, or trinkets.

c. Inventories all items and securely boxes or places them in a container together with one copy of the inventory. He clearly marks the container with the owner's name, rank, serial number, status (Killed In Action, Missing In Action) and designated beneficiary, if known, and forwards it to the Effects Quartermaster, Communications Zone.

d. Turns in all funds to the Finance Department and gets a receipt in duplicate. This receipt is placed in the effects container. On all copies of the Inventory of Effects, the date, name and symbol number of the Finance Officer receiving the funds is recorded.

e. Forwards by separate mail direct to the Effects Quartermaster, Communications Zone, all legal papers, such as negotiable instruments and wills, together with one copy of the Inventory of Effects and one copy of the receipt for any funds turned in. On the Inventory of Effects, there are also listed any money orders, negotiable instruments, deeds, or wills. Also recorded are the names and addresses of any private debtors or creditors, the name and address of the designated beneficiary, if known, and the date and means of shipment of the effects.

f. Disposes of items of no intrinsic or sentimental value, such as partly used cakes of soap and other toilet articles, playing cards, tobacco or candy.

g. Withdraws and destroys items which may cause embarrassment by their presence.

h. Sends one copy of the Inventory of Effects to the organization commander to be placed with the individual's service record; one copy to the Effects Quartermaster, Communications Zone; places one copy in the container with the effects, and retains one copy. An inventory is not forwarded direct to relatives or friends.

46. Use of personal effects as means of identification. Personal effects constituted one of the principal means of identification. It is for this reason stress was laid on the importance of having all personal effects accompany the body during evacuation. The following are comments from the Third United States Army: "Personal Effects were removed from deceased persons at the cemetery by Graves Registration personnel, and only in the presence of two or more men. The personal effects furnished many important identifying clues through the information they contained."[3]

47. Disposal.

a. Personal effects assembled and inventoried at the cemetery and those effects to be forwarded as outlined in paragraph 43 above, were forwarded under guard to the Army Quartermaster Class II & IV Depots where the packages were tallied in and receipts given. The packages

were, in turn, forwarded to the Effects Depot in the Communications Zone.[4] In the European Theater of Operations pouches for the shipment of personal and other effects to the Zone of Interior were provided in December 1944. These pouches were used by the Graves Registration Companies at the cemeteries to ship personal effects by registered mail direct to the Army Effects Bureau in the Zone of Interior. At the cemetery pouches were sealed with personal effects of 20 to 25 deceased.[6] Difficulty was encountered due to postal requirements for packing items. This necessitated the expenditure of excessive time and labor.[5] An advantage of using the personal effects pouches was that all correspondence pertaining to the personal effects of a deceased could be sent from the Zone of Interior direct to the responsible Graves Registration Company, and irregularities checked immediately.[6] Pouches were used to ship personal effects of United States personnel only.[2]

b. Disposal of effects of deceased Allied personnel was accomplished by the Effects Quartermaster, Communications Zone, who turned them over to the corresponding Allied agency. Enemy effects were clearly marked as such and were forwarded to the Effects Quartermaster, Communications Zone, for disposal.[2]

SECTION 2

DISCUSSION

48. General. Prior to D-Day no definite procedure had been outlined for the handling of personal and other effects. The armies had inexperienced personnel who were limited by bulletins and directives which provided no clear procedures to follow. The Quartermaster Class II & IV Depots in the armies were overburdened with effects. This created a bottleneck within supply channels supporting the combat troops. The solution to the problem was further delayed by the late arrival on the continent of the Effects Quartermaster, Communications Zone. Upon arrival on the continent, the Effects Quartermaster had to take over approximately 20,000 pieces of unprocessed effects. Lack of packaging and shipping supplies and transportation became important factors.

49. Earlier publications did not describe in detail the handling of effects and their disposal. When ETO-SOP #26, Burials and Effects, was received in the field the section on effects was immediately adopted. This alleviated conditions to a great extent on the mechanics of effects handling. However, the problem of congestion at the Army Quartermaster Class II & IV Depots and lack of transportation to the Effects Depots in the Communications Zone remained unsolved. When the system of using personal effects pouches was introduced, it proved to be an improvement though not a solution. Further, it was found that effects passed through too many hands before reaching final destination with resulting loss and pilferage. Placing of responsibility was difficult.

Bibliography

Chapter 6

1. War Department FM 10-63, January 1945.

2. ETO-SOP #26, 9 June 1944, Burials and Effects.

3. Letter, Third US Army, 14 May 45, subj: "Lessons Learned in Graves Registration from July 31, 1944 to May 9, 1945."

4. Memorandum #31, Hq Fifteenth US Army, 27 March 1945.

5. AGF Report #933, Organization and Operation of QM Section, Ninth US Army, 10 May 1945.

6. "Analysis of Quartermaster Operations Experience, Graves Registration and Effects Operations", a paper prepared by Hq US THEATER GRAVES REGISTRATION SERVICE, THEATER SERVICE FORCES, EUROPEAN THEATER.

CHAPTER 7

ORGANIZATION OF GRAVES REGISTRATION UNITS

50. Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-297.

a. Personnel. A study of Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-297 reveals that the officer personnel is adequate. It is believed the following revisions concerning enlisted personnel are necessary:

(1) Four qualified morticians, on the basis of one per platoon, are required to process the remains of unknowns and of badly mutilated bodies. If the company is operating as a unit, all four can be advantageously used in the morgues and processing area.

(2) Because of the extensive paper work in a Graves Registration Company, four clerk-typists should be substituted for four of the 12 clerks, general. Under the present Tables of Organization and Equipment there are a total of five clerk-typists; one for company headquarters and one for each platoon. Submission of reports and records was often delayed because of the physical impossibility of four typists turning out the amount of typing required.

(3) There is a definite need for personnel trained in the detection and removal of mines and booby-traps. Frequently qualified men were not available from combat engineer units to assist Graves Registration personnel. This delayed the removal of bodies from mined and booby-trapped areas. It is believed two men already included in the present Tables of Organization and Equipment could be given training in detecting and removing mines and booby-traps. Suitable equipment would be required.

(4) The value of photographs in establishing the identity of unknowns makes it apparent that a qualified photographer is necessary. It is believed one man now included in the Tables of Organization and Equipment could be trained for this duty.

(5) In the European Theater of Operations the average medical technician was not qualified to make good tooth charts. The medical technician in each platoon should be trained in dental technique.

(6) There is a need for an artificer. The general utility work required by a Graves Registration Company is extensive. One

man presently in the Tables of Organization and Equipment could be trained as an artificer.

b. Equipment.

(1) Change 2, 22 December 1944, to Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-297 authorized the Pistol, cal. .45, automatic, for each officer and enlisted man, except attached medical personnel, in the Graves Registration Company. Experience in the European Theater of Operations indicated this change desirable. No additional change in weapons is recommended.

(2) Tentage is required to shield the processing area and morgue from public observation. Experience in the European Theater of Operations indicates that the latrine screen is suited for this purpose. Six additional screens, latrine, are needed.

(3) The organic vehicles are believed sufficient. Seven 1-ton trailers are needed for the purpose of hauling remains. The addition of seven 1-ton trailers would provide each 3/4-ton weapons carrier with a trailer.

(4) Eight additional standard typewriters are needed. Portables are not satisfactory for the amount of administrative work required. The typing of forms is not satisfactory with the portable machine. The four portable typewriters authorized could be deleted if the standard typewriter is substituted.

(5) Twenty-four knives, stripping, are needed for the removal of effects. The blade should be curved with the sharp edge on the inside of the curve, giving a hook effect. This type knife is excellent for entering pockets. A curve in the reverse direction as in a boning knife was tried but was found to be entirely unsatisfactory.

(6) A small surgical or mortician's kit, consisting of spatulas, syringes, knives, scissors, needles, and probing instruments is required by the morticians in processing unknowns and in preparing them for photographing.

(7) A camera for making portraits is desirable. The present standard camera used by the Signal Corps Photo Company produces excellent results. Due to rapid decomposition in warm weather

pictures should be taken immediately. Signal Corps photographers often cannot be secured for days and by the time they arrive, the remains are in no condition to be photographed.

(8) An earth auger for sinking test holes when selecting new cemeteries is desirable. Units would be able to select sites free from rocks.

(9) Dental mirrors are required in making tooth charts. One for each platoon would be sufficient.

(10) A small generator to provide power for lights in the morgue and office is desirable. Lanterns are not dependable and do not produce sufficient light.

(11) Rubber gloves are required for removing personal effects. Neither the gloves, surgical, nor gloves, rubber, electrician's, are satisfactory. The former are too light for service and latter too heavy for operations. The common type of household rubber glove of medium weight would be better. Twelve pairs are needed.

(12) Gloves, rubber, electrician's, are excellent for personnel engaged in loading and unloading bodies. Twelve pairs are needed.

(13) Gloves, surgical, are useful to the morticians in the morgue. Six pairs are needed.

51. Comparative study of Graves Registration Units.

a. In the European Theater of Operations all Graves Registration Companies were organized under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-297. No experience was had with Graves Registration Companies organized under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-298. A comparison of the two Tables of Organization and Equipment reveals the following:

(1) The Graves Registration Company organized under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-297 is responsible for the supervision of the identification and burial of the dead, the collection and disposition of the personal effects, and the plotting of locations and the registration of battlefield graves and cemeteries. Labor for grave digging is normally provided from service units of the Quartermaster Corps or other sources unless burial by organizations is dictated. Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-297 provides six officers and 119 enlisted men including attached

medical personnel. The company is divided into a company headquarters of two officers and 19 enlisted men and four platoons of one officer and 22 enlisted men each. The platoon is the basic work unit and is designed to serve a division. Each platoon is divided into three sections with six enlisted men to a section.

(2) The Graves Registration Company organized under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-298 is responsible for the physical collection, evacuation, identification and burial of battlefield dead; the collection and disposition of personal effects and, subject to the approval of higher headquarters, the selection of sites for cemeteries. Labor for grave digging and other requirements is provided from Quartermaster Service companies or from other available sources. Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-298 consists of five officers and 260 enlisted men including attached medical personnel. The company is divided into a company headquarters of two officers and 25 enlisted men and three platoons. Each platoon consists of one officer and 74 enlisted men. The platoon is the basic work unit designed to serve a division. The platoon is divided into three sections. Each section collects, identifies and evacuates battlefield dead. It is divided into a collecting squad and an evacuation squad.

b. A comparison of the two organizations indicates that the basic function of the Quartermaster Graves Registration Company as set forth in Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-297 is to act in a supervisory capacity on Graves Registration matters, while under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-298 the company actually performs the physical operation of the Graves Registration Service. This is evidenced by the large increase in personnel under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-298, particularly organic labor for the collecting and evacuation squads. Additional clerical and mess personnel is also provided. The attached medical personnel are included organically with the platoon and section.

c. In comparing the equipment of the Graves Registration Company as organized under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-297 and that provided under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-298 it will be noted that the individual and organizational equipment under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-298 was increased to accomodate the additional personnel. Under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-297 there are

allocated five 1/4-ton trailers; five 1-ton trailers; 12 trucks, 3/4-ton weapons carriers; and one truck, 2-1/2-ton 6x6 cargo. Under Tables of Organization and Equipment there are no 1/4-ton trailers. However, 23 1-ton trailers; three trucks, 3/4-ton weapons carriers; and 23 trucks, 2-1/2-ton 6x6 cargo, have been included. The increase in transportation is authorized the company to provide organic transportation for the evacuation of the remains of deceased personnel to the cemetery, and to increase the mobility of the company.

d. Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-500, Quartermaster Service Organizations, provides organized graves registration teams to insure graves registration service for small forces. When required these teams may be used to supplement existing graves registration facilities.

(1) Team GA supervised the identification and burial of the dead, the collection and disposition of personal effects, and the location and registration of battlefield graves and cemeteries for a force of 5,000 troops. It is provided with one 1-ton trailer and one truck, 3/4-ton weapons carrier. Labor may be furnished by teams JA and JB, Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-500, or other sources.

(2) Team GB provides personnel to augment team GA and furnishes graves registration service for an additional 5,000 troops.

(3) Team GC supervises the operations of teams from GD and GE units. It receives graves registration records from evacuation teams GE, inspects and forwards them to base depots and is responsible for interment. This unit can process the records and supervise the operations of from one to three GD and GE teams. Team GC is provided with one 1-ton trailer, one truck, 1/4-ton, one truck, 3/4-ton weapons carrier, and one truck, 2-1/2-ton 6x6 cargo.

(4) Team GD provides litter teams to search and collect battlefield dead for a force of 5,000 troops.

(5) Team GE provides personnel and equipment for the identification and evacuation of the battlefield dead collected by team GD. The team is provided with two 1-ton trailers and two trucks, 2-1/2-ton 6x6 cargo.

(6) The combination of one team GC, one team GD and one team GE will serve one infantry regiment and its supporting elements. One team GC, three teams GD and three teams GE will serve one infantry division.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SECTION 1

CONCLUSIONS

52. General.

a. That standard procedures, proper liaison, adequate control and technical supervision did not exist between echelons of command and steps should be taken to properly organize channels for forceful control of graves registration matters.

b. That the Theater Graves Registration Service Headquarters operates more efficiently when located contiguously with Headquarters, Casualty Division, Office of the Theater Adjutant General.

c. That the Army Graves Registration Officer should have sufficient rank and personnel assigned to his office to enable him to carry out the Army's responsibilities pertaining to graves registration and the proper technical supervision and control thereof.

d. That more graves registration units and personnel would have been available for the armies had small cemetery teams and area searching and disinterment teams been organized and used by Communications Zone.

e. That training in graves registration organization, functions and administrative matters should have been given combat units prior to D-Day. This would have eliminated much of the difficulty encountered in the initial phases of operations in the European Theater of Operations.

f. That graves registration personnel should be phased-in early in assault landings in order to assist in keeping the assault area clear and to aid in preserving identities of casualties.

53. Evacuation.

a. That evacuation and collection of deceased personnel are best accomplished by trained teams serving with combat units. Teams should be organic to or attached to units the size of regimental combat teams or combat commands.

b. That special precautions must be taken in the handling of bodies because of mines and booby-traps. Specialized training of personnel be given and additional equipment be authorized for clearing mines and booby-traps.

54. Identification.

a. That mortician's are indispensable in the process of establishing identity.

b. That photography is valuable in establishing identity.

c. That the individual soldier can be made more identity-conscious.

d. That responsibility for establishing identities should be more definitely prescribed.

55. Burials.

a. That a detailed procedure for cemetery operations is needed to standardize the operations of all Graves Registration Companies.

b. That a cemetery plot plan, preferably with 144 graves, should be published in FM 10-63.

c. That separate cemeteries should be established for enemy dead.

56. Personal Effects.

a. That Army Quartermaster Class II & IV Depots should not be burdened with the handling of effects.

b. That effects turned in to Army Quartermaster Class II and IV Depots passed through too many hands with resulting loss and pilferage.

57. Graves Registration Units.

a. That the Graves Registration Company organized under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-298 is an improvement over that organized under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-297.

b. That the Graves Registration Company organized under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-297 was unable to perform its functions with maximum efficiency.

c. That certain changes in personnel and equipment are needed in both Graves Registration Companies.

d. That cellular Graves Registration units organized under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-500 are of value in supplementing graves registration units and activities.

SECTION 2

RECOMMENDATIONS

58. General.

a. That a Graves Registration Service Command be established in a Theater of Operations prior to or in the early phases of operations. The commanding officer should be on the staff of the Theater Chief Quartermaster.

b. That the Office of the Theater Graves Registration Officer be located contiguously with that of the Casualty Division of the Theater Adjutant General throughout operations.

c. That the rank of the Army Graves Registration Officer be that of Colonel and that sufficient personnel of appropriate rank and sufficient graves registration units be provided to properly carry out the Army Commander's responsibilities as pertain to graves registration.

d. That cemetery teams and area searching and disinterment teams be organized under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-500 for graves registration work in Communications Zone.

e. That training be given prior to combat to key graves registration personnel in all units to develop standardized procedures.

f. That graves registration personnel be phased-in early in all assault landings.

59. Evacuation.

a. That where combat units are not served by a platoon from the Graves Registration Company organized under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-298, evacuation and collection teams organized under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-500 be provided in sufficient numbers.

b. That personnel in Graves Registration units be given training in the detection and removal of booby-traps and mines and that suitable equipment be provided.

60. Identification.

a. That morticians be provided in Graves Registration Companies on the basis of one per platoon.

b. That one man in the Graves Registration Company be trained in photography and suitable equipment be provided.

c. That tactful and non-fatalistic instructions on the value of identity be given to every soldier at the proper time, preferably early in basic training rather than immediately before entry into combat.

d. That the Army Graves Registration Officer be charged with the responsibility of taking initiative to identify unknowns during combat operations and so long thereafter as the organizations of which the deceased were members are under the army's control. Further, that at all other times this responsibility be carried out by the Theater of Operations Graves Registration Officer.

61. Burials.

a. That FM 10-63 be revised to include detailed procedures on all cemetery operations.

b. That FM 10-63 be revised to prescribe the 144 grave plot plan.

c. That FM 10-63 be revised to prescribe separate cemeteries for enemy dead.

62. Personal Effects.

a. That separate and distinct Personal Effects and Baggage Branches be organized at army level and sufficient transportation allocated.

b. That the system of using personal effects pouches be further developed and made mandatory.

63. Graves Registration Units.

a. That the Graves Registration Company organized under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-298 be adopted in preference to that organized under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-297.

b. That the changes in personnel and equipment mentioned in Chapter 7 be adopted for Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-297 if this organization is to be retained.

c. That changes in personnel and equipment recommended for Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-297 also be authorized for Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-298 where applicable.

d. That cellular graves registration teams organized under Tables of Organization and Equipment 10-500 be made available in a Theater of Operations and used as needed.

HEADQUARTERS
AMERICAN GRAVES REGISTRATION COMMAND
EUROPEAN THEATER

(Rear) APO 887
24 November 1945.

My dear Colonel Broom,

Your letter to Colonel Bohrink, 14 November 1945, has been received and referred to Colonel Powers for review. Colonel Howard, whom I also wished to review it, has been away in southern France on a mission. A section has been added, paragraph 60, page 80 and a new paragraph 64, page 81. It is recommended that both of these be incorporated in the General Board study.

I am sorry this has been delayed. It was actually prepared and ready on 20 but due to the move from Paris and the Thanksgiving Day holiday it was not returned as expeditiously as we would have liked.

We appreciated very much the op ortunity to review the report on GRC services and consider it an excellent study.

Sincerely,

/s/A. N. Stubblebine Jr.
/t/A. N. STUBBLEBINE JR.,
Colonel, QMC
Chief of Staff.