



C Company's footbridge across the Roer River – March 1945



**Edmund William Mantz**  
**Technician 4 U.S. Army**  
**11 October 1943 – 10 January 1946**



C Company, 299<sup>th</sup>  
Engineer Battalion Guidon



The only one of 299<sup>th</sup> Engineer  
Battalion's eight bulldozers that  
made it ashore at Omaha Beach

Edmund was born on 11 August 1912 in New Tripoli, Pennsylvania, in Lehigh County, where he attended grade school in North Whitehall Township, and graduated from Slatington High School in 1932. Edmund then first worked for a year as a laborer for a painting contractor, and then as a carpenter for Willard Stahley in Neffs, Pennsylvania. He married **Edna Miriam Hermany** (born 24 January 1913) in Reverend Bachman's home in Slatington on 13 June 1936. They first lived in a small apartment above Edna's parents' garage in Emmaus, Pennsylvania, until Edmund completed building a new home next to them in 1941. Edmund was drafted and was inducted into the Army in Allentown, Pennsylvania, as a Private on 11 October 1943. After four months of basic training at Fort McClellan, Alabama, Edmund was assigned to the Civil Engineering Corps and classified as a Heavy Construction Carpenter. He also received eight weeks training at Fort McClellan as an Armor Artificer prior to being assigned overseas to the European Theater. He left the States on 2 May 1944, arriving two weeks later to join Company C, 299<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, which was attached to the 112th Engineer Combat Group, First Army, and was undergoing training at Dorchester, England, for D-Day at Normandy, France. On 6 June 1944, Company C landed on Omaha Beach, sustaining heavy casualties. On 10 June 1944, the Battalion moved inland to La Valle, France. For their valor on the beaches of Normandy, the Battalion was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation. They continued on through France via Carentan, Orglandes, Saint-Côme-du-Mont, and then Leisville, when the Normandy Campaign came to an end on 24 July 1944. On 3 September 1944, the Battalion packed up and moved through Versailles and Paris into Belgium, and crossed the Franco-Belgian border on 14 September 1944 after the Allies put the Germans into full retreat and brought the Northern France Campaign to an end. On 28 December 1944 the Battalion was attached to the 1128<sup>th</sup> Engineer Combat Group, XVIII Airborne Corps, and moved out for Spa, Belgium, to join the fighting at the northern flank of the Germans at the Battle of the Bulge (16 December 1944 – 25 January 1945). Edmund was wounded in action on 30 December 1944 in the Battle of the Bulge, for which he received the Purple Heart. On 6 February 1945, the Battalion moved under cover of darkness and secret orders to Lichtenbusch, Germany, a small village just inside the German border and in the first defense of the Ziegfried line. They crossed the Roer and Rhine rivers, and on 21 March 1945, the Battalion assumed the guard and maintenance of the treadway bridge at Remagen. They crossed the bridge four days later. On 19 April 1945, the Battalion was relieved of assignment to the First Army, and was assigned to the Third Army as the war was drawing to an end. On 2 May 1945, the Battalion crossed the Danube River at Dorf, and continued on to Zolling and into Bayreuth Nurnberg. The German forces surrendered in Western Europe on 7 May 1945. Edmund participated in the Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes, and Central Europe Campaigns. He left Europe on 19 December 1945, returned to the States on 5 January 1946, and was discharged as a Technician 4 at Indiantown Gap Pennsylvania Military Reservation on 10 January 1946. In addition to the Purple Heart, Edmund was awarded the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal (w/5 bronze battle stars) and the World War II Victory Medal. Edmund returned home to their house in Emmaus, where he and Edna lived until moving to their new home in Lower Macungie Township in 1990. In December 1964, they purchased the Lauer farm in Lower Macungie Township, restored Lauer's Mill and the miller's house and barn on Mountain Road, and converted the farmhouse and mill into apartments. In 1948, Edmund and Edna adopted a daughter, **Joanne Louise**. Edmund became a self-employed contractor building, remodeling, and repairing homes until his retirement in 1981. In his youth, Edmund played the trombone in the New Tripoli Band and also enjoyed oil painting and pen and ink drawing. All of his adult life he was active in St. Paul's U.C.C. in Trexlertown, where he served for over 39 years as a deacon and later as Elder Emeritus. He built the St. Paul's U.C.C. parsonage, now the office of A.B.E. Doors & Windows in Wescosville, and he was the general contractor for major interior renovations of the church in 1976 as well as for other church projects. He was a 40-year member and past Master of the Trexlertown Grange, a member of Lehigh-Northampton Pomona Grange, the Pennsylvania State Grange, and the National Grange. After his retirement, Edmund remained active by working on projects in his workshop. Edmund died at home on 1 September 1995. He is buried in St. Paul's Church Cemetery in Trexlertown, Pennsylvania. His parents were **Herbert Lewis Mantz** (24 September 1891 – 22 October 1975) and **Minnie Florence Snyder** (16 December 1889 – 30 January 1939) who had eight children. Edmund's brother **Donald Lee** enlisted in the Army in 1953 and served until June 1955, when he died accidentally while off duty.