HISTORICAL SKETCH

The First Army of the United States is the oldest and longest serving numbered field army in the country. It was established in France during World War I on 10 August 1918, under the command of General John J. Pershing. The army continued to serve through the war until it was deactivated in 1919. It was reactivated for service in 1933 for training with the Army, Army Reserve, and the National Guard before being sent to Europe to participate in Operation Overlord in 1944. During World War II, the First Army contributed in campaigns in Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes, Rhineland, and Central Europe in addition to battles in Hürtgen Forest, at Ludendorff Bridge, and in the Ruhr Pocket.

The 654th Engineers Topographical Battalion served as part of the First Army during World War II. The unit produced scale maps used during Operation Overlord for the landing at Omaha beach on D-Day (6 June 1944), including a 3D scale model of the beach terrain. After D-Day, the 654th Engineers continued to serve as a topographical battalion throughout the First Army's campaigns.

Sources:

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of one second edition copy of an Engineer Field Notebook reproduced by the 654th Engineers in 1945 that belonged to the family of Robert J. Jackson. The notebook includes information regarding measurement conversions, the properties of construction materials, map sketch symbols, reconnaissance report guides, bridge construction, vehicle characteristics, fortifications, and explosives properties. The notebook also includes handwritten notes and calculations.
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Engineer field notebook, 1945

CONTAINER

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