

A: They were right. I didn't have any draftees at all. I think the draftees are all right. I never served with them. We were all volunteers; they had come in without being forced in.

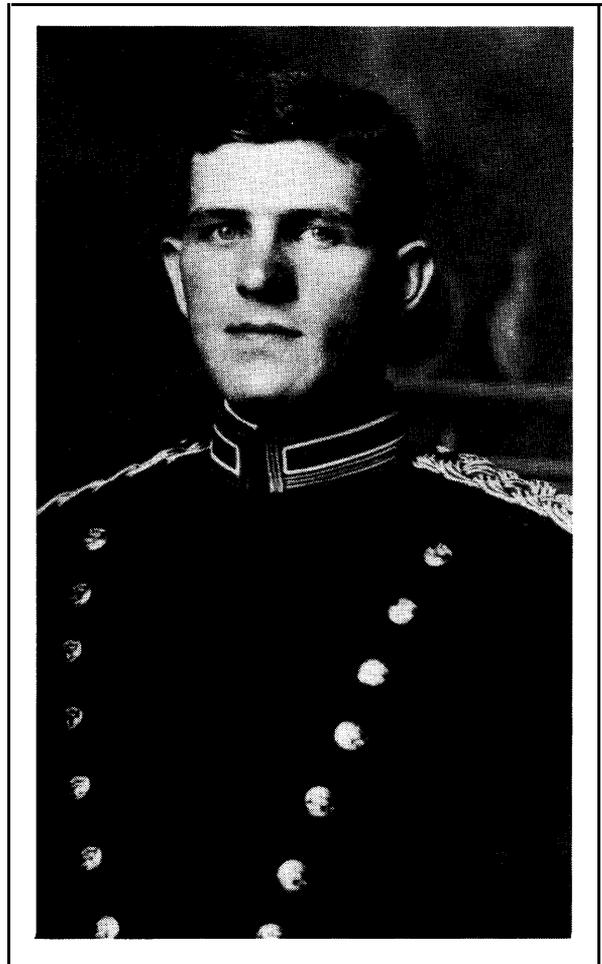
Q: Well, I guess that answers another question I had about the morale of the troops. It sounds like the morale was extremely high.

A: It was, it was tops. They would try anything. Not only that, they would lead. Yes, and follow you anyplace, anywhere. I had some good ones.

Fort Leavenworth

Q: I have that in May 1917 to March 1918 you were assigned to the 7th Engineers at Fort Leavenworth.

A: Wait a minute—those dates. I went from Brown to Washington Barracks at DC, which is now the National War College [Fort Lesley J. McNair]. See, that was the old Engineer post in those days. We only had three regiments of Engineers in the Army: the 1st, 2d, and 3d. Well, at that time battalions expanded from two companies of the old 1st Engineers to become a regiment—and we all drew lots for regimental assignment. Our regiment was assigned to form the 1st, 6th, and 7th Regiments; we were officers



William M. Hoge as an engineer lieutenant in full dress uniform.

for those three regiments. We drew lots on that and of course the choice everybody wanted was the 1st Engineers. It was the first one to go overseas but we had nothing to do with that—we just drew lots and I was assigned to the 7th Engineers. We went out to Leavenworth and a company joined us from the border. I was with B Company in the 1st when the 1st came up from the border—another company came up from the border and formed the 2d Battalion of the 7th Engineers. We formed the 1st Battalion from B Company, 1st Engineers.

Q: I see, so the 7th Engineers was actually born out of the 1st Engineers through the drawing of lots?

A: The 1st Engineers, the old 1st Engineers, formed three regiments.

France and Luxembourg

Q: That was in preparation for the war?

A: That was just after the war was declared and we went to Leavenworth, and we stayed out there and organized the 7th Engineers until we were ordered to France in March of 1918. I think we were ordered there in February. I know we were for I missed the birth of my first son. He was born in February but we were already on the way to the port of debarkation. So, I never saw him until he was a year and a half old. He was walking and talking when I came home. We went to France and the regiment was then split. Well, my company—the company I had—was assigned to the construction of the hospital at Rimaucourte, a base hospital.

Q: Rimaucourte, is that correct, sir?

A: Rimaucourte. What the hell is the name of that province? Anyway, it's up near the border. It was the Haute-Marne.

Q: The Belgium border.