

4.2 Chemical Mortar



In a letter written from New Guinea on December 21st, Sgt. Melvin Davis, son of Mr. and Mrs. George Davis, of Rigby, enclosed the above picture of his 4.2 inch chemical mortar. Sgt. Davis is at the right and Corporal Robert Burton, son of Mrs. Cora Burton, of Rigby, is behind the mortar in center of picture.

Sgt. Davis and Cpl. Burton are two of the 16 soldiers out of the original company of 94 leaving Rigby in September 1940 who remain with the organization after 34 months of overseas service. The company has been reorganized from an engineer company to a tank destroyer unit and for the past several months has seen action as part of a chemical warfare battalion.

Members of Company F when it left Rigby in 1940 who are with the Chemical Battalion in New Guinea at this time are Bernard L. Anderson, James Ball, Hubert Burton, Robert Burton, Earl Brady, Woodrow Carlson, Melvin Davis, McKay Evans, John F. Edwards, Dick Later, Keith Madsen, Don Morgan, Jack McElherne, Elmer Rowe, Dale Rouse, Oswin D. Squires.

In telling of his squad, Sgt. Davis states: "We have quite a representation of states in the squad. There is Jessie Etre, a rebel from Texas; Ted Wojotowiz, a Polock from Michigan; Raminez, a Spaniard from California Dagenais, a Frenchman from New York; and of course, Bobby Burton, my corporal and myself, two Rigby-ites. That is really a conglomeration, but really I think they are a swell bunch and as good a squad as I would ever want. I guess you have been wondering just what we have been doing for so long. You can get a better idea than I can tell you after you see the picture of the gun."

Sgt. Davis concluded his letter by sending best wishes to all the people at home from all the fellows still left in New Guinea from the original Company F.

Information released by the War department concerning the 4.2 inch chemical mortar indicates that it has proven very effective and especially so in jungle warfare where the terrain prevents the use of field artillery. The mortar because of its portability can