



**Technician Fourth Grade Laurens R. Graham**



*Left to Right: 12th Army Group Shoulder Patch; 3187th Distinctive Unit Insignia*



**Company C, 3187th Signal Service Battalion, 12th Army Group  
1923- 2008  
Service: 1938 to 1980**

Laurens R. Graham, COL, USAR (Ret.)  
7 May 1923 – 20 March 2006  
WWII Enlistment: 19 November 1942 – 21 April 1946  
T/4, Repeaterman, Field (MOS 187)  
Co. C, 3187<sup>th</sup> Signal Service Battalion (SSBN), 12<sup>th</sup> Army Group, ETO

**Campaigns:**

Rhineland, Central Europe

**Awards:**

**Individual:**

WWII:

Good Conduct Medal

American Campaign Medal

European/African/Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with two campaign stars

World War II Victory Medal

Occupation Medal – Germany

Post-war:

Armed Forces Reserve Medal (AFRM) with 3 bronze hourglass devices (40 years?) –

**dates unk.**

Meritorious Service Medal (MSM) – **date unk.**

**Unit:**

Meritorious Service Unit Commendation – **need verification from unit records.**

**1938 – 41:** Georgia Military Academy (GMA), graduate Class of '40, completed post-graduate year (West Point prep course) 1941 but did not take West Point exam, accepted at Georgia Tech but unable to attend, enrolled at University of South Carolina (USC)

**1942:** USC student (electrical engineering). Enlisted in ERC (19 Nov.)

**1943:**

5 July: Entered Active Service (AUS), reported to Fort Jackson (SC) x 5 weeks, requested Signal Corps but assigned to Corps of Engineers

Aug. – Nov.: Fort Leonard Wood, basic training x 17 weeks

December: Grinnel College (IA) – 2 weeks testing in science, math, engineering. Offered ASTP (Army Specialized Training Program), approved for electrical engineering, sent to Washington State College, Pullman, WA (7 Dec.)

**1944:**

January - March: Washington State College - ASTP 12-week course (Electrical Engineering), completed 16 March 1944

March: Camp Kohler (CA) – 6 weeks basic training in Signal Corps

20 March: 3187<sup>th</sup> Signal Service Bn activated, Camp Kohler (code name: 'Rambler')

May - July: UC Davis (CA) – 12-week course in installation of toll (long distance) equipment

Aug. / Sept.: Enroute east by rail, attended Enlisted Signal School, Fort Monmouth (NJ) x 4 weeks. Co. C, 15<sup>th</sup> Signal Training Regt.

11 October: Assigned to 3187<sup>th</sup> SSBN, C company (telephone)

October: Granted leave, visited home (Columbia, SC), returned via rail (Silver Meteor) to NYC arriving back by 31 Oct.

Nov./ Dec.: Camp Edison (NJ)

10 December: Advance Echelon 4 (4 officers, 191 enlisted) of 3187<sup>th</sup> SSBN, sent via rail to Camp Miles Standish / POE: Boston, MA

17 – 27 December: Echelon 4 enroute to European Theater of Operations (ETO) on SS *Marine Robin* (Convoy CU-51). Promoted to T/5 aboard ship. Wrote for ship newsletter, "Round the Robin Sea News." Witnessed Destroyer Escorts drop depth charges on sound contacts (suspected German U-boats).

28 December: Port of Departure (POD): Swansea, Wales, by rail to Leominster, *Herefordshire, England (arrived 30 Dec.)* 3187<sup>th</sup> SSBN (AP0 633). Billeted?

## **1945:**

January: Leominster, England. Visted Bristol, Birmingham, Shrewsbury. 3-day pass to London last of month - heard two V-2 rockets hit city.

2/5? February: Echelon 4 departed Leominster for Southampton

9 February: Port of Embarkation (POE): Southampton, boarded SS *Borinquen* for channel crossing to Le Havre, Normandy, France.

February: Duclair (near Rouen), departed Barinton enroute to Verdun 12<sup>th</sup> Army Group Headquarters (12-Gr HQ) via rail in 40&8 boxcars across France passing thru Beauvais, Chantilly, Sedan.

15 February: Echelon 4 reported for duty to (12 A-Gp), Verdun (Eagle Signal center - Eagle Main). Billeted at Eagle Rear in former French military academy / army barracks (Caserne - name?)

2 March granted "jeep license" (MVO Permit for Trucks, Cargo, ¼ to 1½ ton)

31 March: Signal Team (GO-1) to Luxemburg City via truck – installed switchboard in tel. exchange / post office building.

April: returned to Verdun

22 April: Wiesbaden (new 12 A-Gp HQ) – installed repeater station. Billeted at Metropole Hotel, then at SS Police Barracks

April – May: Traveled through Biebrich, Hofheim, Worms, Metz, Saarbrücken, Mainz, Frankfurt. Crossed Rhine on F. D. Roosevelt Memorial Bridge, Mainz (May 7)

8 May: V-E Day

9 May: Furth / Nuremberg.

Billeted at #20 Adolph Hitler Strasse in Furth. Took 2 "war trophies" from a courthouse in Nuremberg (Palace of Justice? – future site of Nuremberg Trials)

27 May: Augsburg (7<sup>th</sup> Army HQ). Involved in wire communications between 12 A-Gp (Bradley) and 7<sup>th</sup> Army (Patch) / 6 A-Gp (Devers). Team re-established repeater station and operated long distance telephone network throughout the Schwaben region of Bavaria (May '45 – April '46).

Initially billeted on the 3rd floor, Telephone Exch. #1 Langensmantelstrasse. Later billeted at former home of Augsburg City Architect (23 Weldishoferstrasse) next to the Österreichischer Kaiser (Austrian Emperor) Inn / Biergarten located in Kriegshaber District of Augsburg.

1 June: Promoted to T/4

19 July: Awarded Good Conduct Medal

31 July: 12 A-Gp deactivated, 3187<sup>th</sup> SSBN designated part of Occupation Force, USFET

August: Visited Berchtesgaden / Obersalzberg

October: Visited Team GO-2 at Motzenhofen Repeater Station.

1 November: Transferred to Co. A, 3118<sup>th</sup> SSBN (APO 757), remained in Augsburg

1 December: Transferred to Co. B, 3160<sup>th</sup> SSBN (APO 757), remained in Augsburg

**1946:**

1 March: Transferred to 2<sup>nd</sup> Reinforcement Depot (APO 776) to 31 March

7 April: POE: Le Havre, shipped out on SS *Ernie Pyle* (Op Magic Carpet?)

17 April: Arrived POD: NYC

20 April: Fort Meade (MD) - separation from active service (AUS), redesignated ERC (USAR), 21 April

**Post-War:**

**1948:** Graduated from University of South Carolina with degree in electrical engineering (Feb.), hired by Southern Bell Telephone & Telegraph, Atlanta, GA. Commissioned 2LT in ORC (effective 13 Dec.)

**1949:** Transferred to Columbia, SC. Married Caroline Bradham (14 May), had 3 children (b. 1953, 1956, 1962)

**1951:** Promoted to 1LT, U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) (effective 9 Feb.)

**1956** Promoted to CPT, USAR (effective 8 Feb.)

**1963:** Promoted to MAJ, USAR (effective 7 Feb.)

**1970:** Promoted to LTC, USAR (effective 6 Feb.)

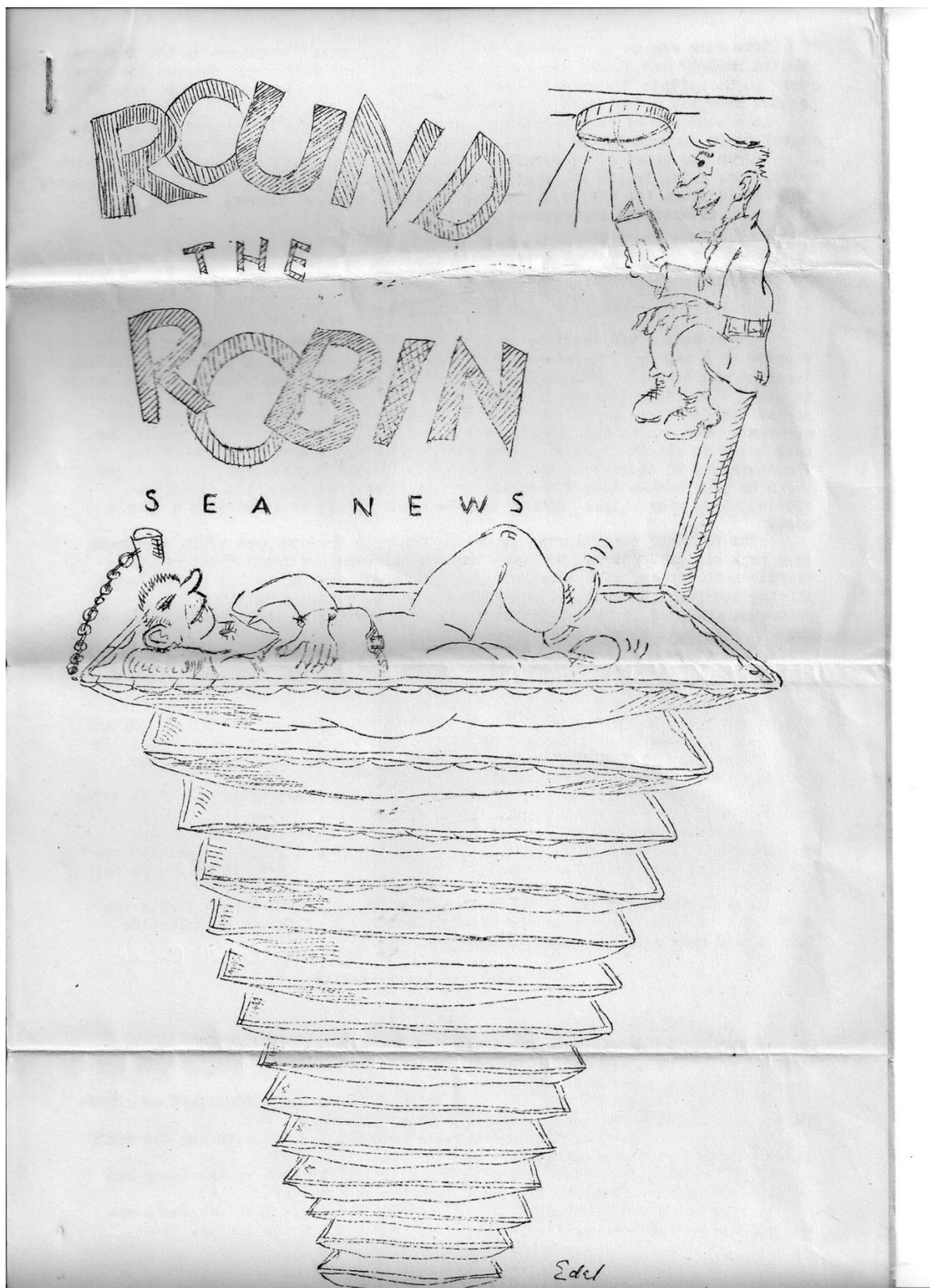
**1971:** Met former 12 A-Gp commander, Gen. Omar N. Bradley, at 35<sup>th</sup> Annual State Chamber of Commerce meeting, Columbia, SC (8 Jan.)

**1975:** Promoted to COL, USAR (effective 28 Aug.)

**1980:** Retired from USAR (effective 23 Dec.)

**1984 - 1985:** Break-up of Bell System, retired from Bell South

**2006:** Died on 20 March. Interred at Greenlawn Memorial Park, Columbia, SC



December 17 to 27, 1944, Wrote for ship newsletter, "Round the Robin Sea News.". onboard the SS *Marine Robin*.





Furth, Germany, May, 1945

