

## 68<sup>TH</sup> ORDNANCE COMPANY – DS SHOP

### 1965

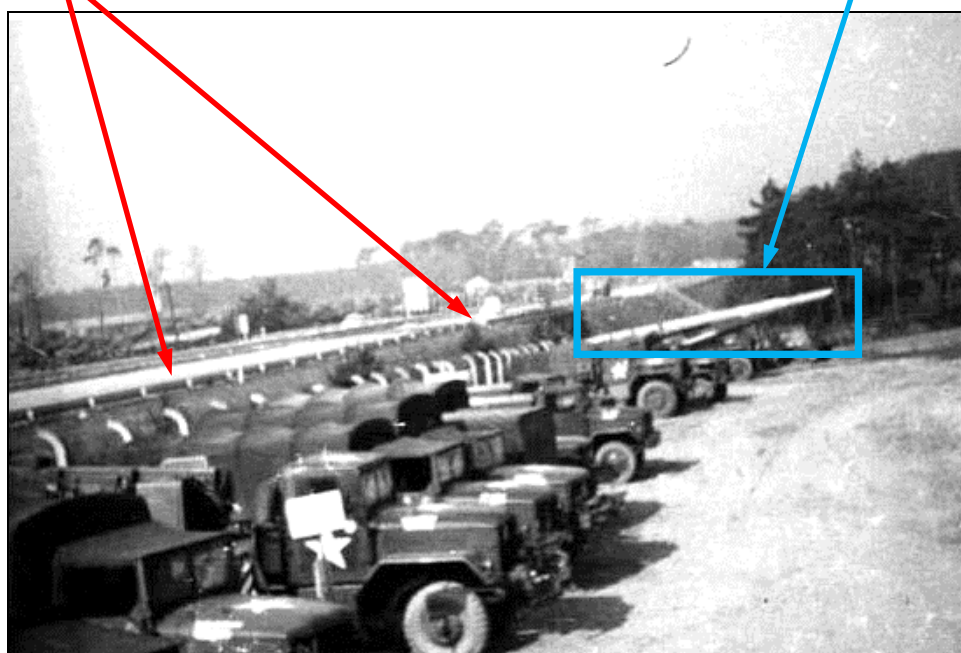
The first shop of the 68<sup>th</sup> Ordnance Company (in my time - 1965) was located on the "North Side" of R.O.B. - the Mannheim-Saarbrücken Autobahn serving as the topographical dividing-line. Once on R.O.B. one had to drive under/through the autobahn's underpass/tunnel to access the North-Side of R.O.B.. On the "other side" and traveling on the one roadway there, the shop was located on the right. For a later reference, the 68<sup>th</sup> relinquished this (horrible) shop area to the "unfortunate" 171<sup>st</sup> Support Platoon in the last part of the calendar year.

#### Mannheim-Saarbrücken Autobahn

*Looking Westbound towards Saarbrücken*

#### Launching Rails

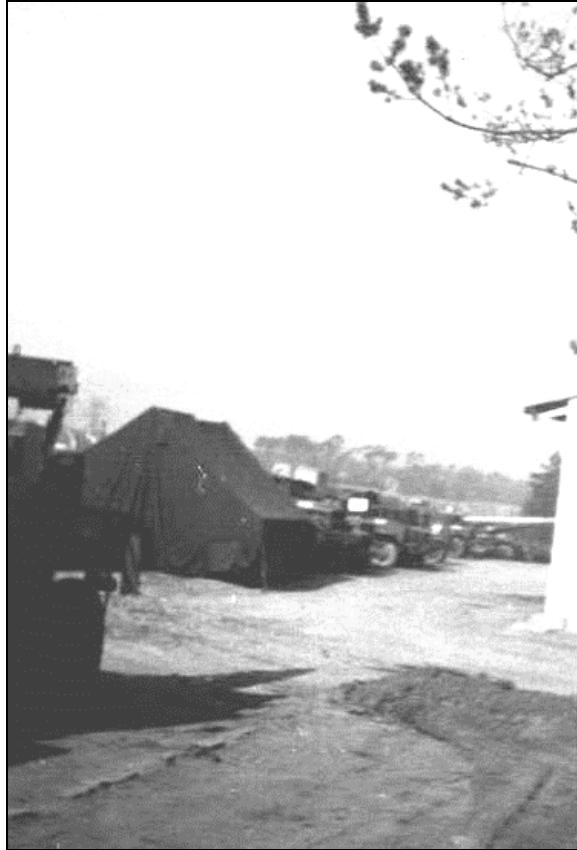
"Honest John" Xptr/Lnchr



This image was taken of the south apron of the shop area, showing not only the autobahn as a "back-drop" (far left), but also (left center) the "Waiting Shop" and "Awaiting Pick-Up" lines of the ARG's job-ordered vehicles. Those 'lines' do, kind of, merge - don't they - a Shop Office issue.

In hind-site, you talk about "old junk", we had a few JOs submitted from the ARGs for their War Stocked "[Honest John](#)" Rocket Transporters/Launchers, 5-ton Mounted, M-47s. In this photo you can see the (over-lapping) rocket launching rails of two M-47s gleaming in the sunlight.

(NOTE: All the photos were shot from the east-end of the shop/shop area which proved very constricting. There existed reasonable peripheral "maneuver areas" around the north and south sides of the shop, but the east-end of the shop area was very "tight" with only enough space to drive/squeeze an M-88 through - the tree line came right up to that point.)

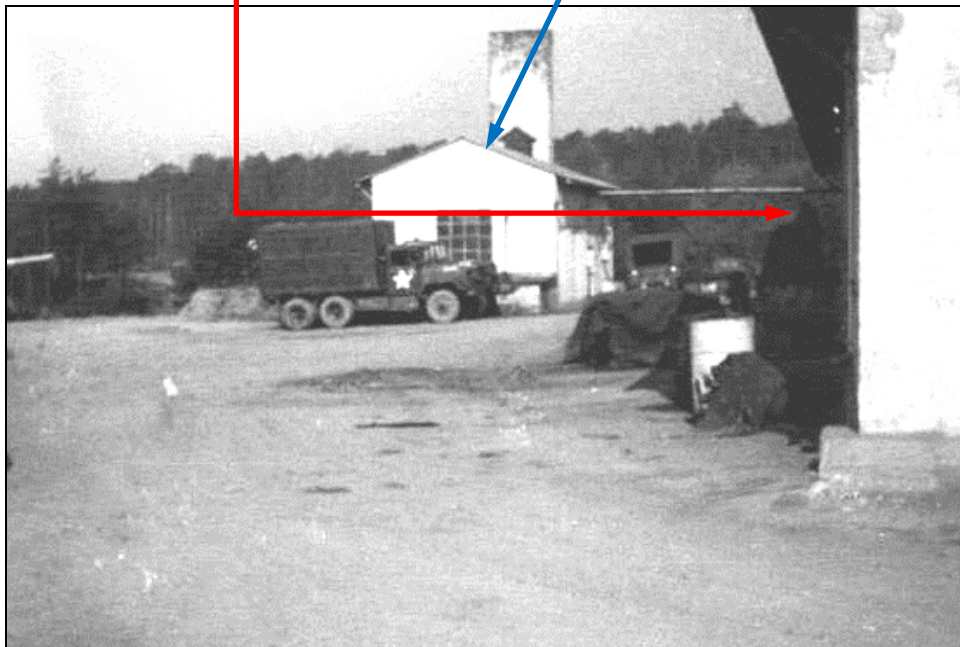


This shot of the south-east corner of the shop area, was taken as far back (into the tree line) from the shop's east-end as one could get. You can see the maintenance tent we "stole" and erected to "enhance" our Track Section operations and, more readily, accomplish the (STANAG) Mods to all the ARG's M-88s, all of which, obviously, were conducted out-side - in the open air. What can be said of the useless (for DS maintenance efforts) center-beamed "Maintenance Tent, Medium".

At the lower portion of the pix you can see the results of our initiative to "make more space" at the shop's east-end - the dirt scrapings/evidence left by our M-88 "back-blading" operation. You can see the separation between the original pathway and the added area we created. It wasn't very much, but it was a marginal gain - considering we couldn't (legally) "take-out" any of "comrade's trees" to make more room. The east-end of the building offered the only access to our Track Section bay. Operationally unrealistic and very tight, right up to the tree line - we needed more and as much "breathing room" as we could get. I nearly went to jail after completing that ("limited") initiative - but, it had to be done !! Good thing I didn't go further and 'attack' the trees.

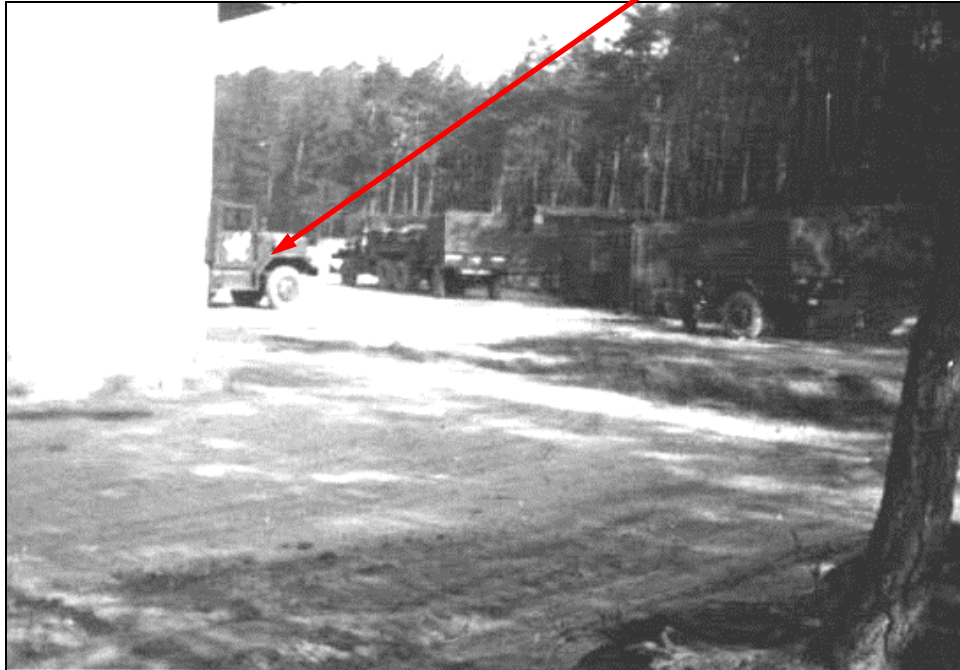
**Boiler-Room/Mechanical Building**

**Wheeled Section Entrance  
(hidden)**



Another view of the south side and area of the shop with the attached boiler-room/mechanical building standing in the middle of everything. It served no use for accomplishing our support mission operations. The boiler didn't provide much creature comforts for us (heat) either. Just beyond the stack-up of 'unserviceable parts' (and out-of-sight) hid the one Wheeled Section entrance.

F&amp;E Shop Van



This, the last photo, shows the north-side area of the shop - there our organic vehicles and equipment was parked. Peeking around the corner, along the north wall of the shop, is one of our operational shop vans - used, as you'd guess, as a functional element in doing mission work - I believe it was the F&E Shop Van. The F&E Section had limited shop space, same as the Track Section, so they had to revert to working out of their van. As addressed in "the article", the Track Section only had enough floor space to work on one or, possibly in a squeeze, two AOS-850 powerpacks at a time. Any of the AVS-1760s (or in the case of M-88s, AVSI-1760s) powerpacks had to be worked outside (thankfully, there were only a few of those jobs), especially in the one end-of-winter cycle we went through there. On the right lower corner of the photo, you can get an idea of how close the tree-line was to the east-end of the shop - even after the completed "back-blade" job.