



703rd Road Block



Vol. IV #4 703rd Tank Destroyer Battalion Association Newsletter 12/1993



THIS ONE TIME, SHOW UP--PLEASE !!



Great News From San Antonio



Our battalion reunion is set for May 17-19, 1994, Tuesday-Thursday, in Springfield, Missouri at the Sheraton Inn. You will register at the Sheraton, \$54/day/room, and send a fee of \$25 to Fred Hunt of which \$15 will be for the banquet.

Below are revisions of info as reported in the September, 1993 Road Block:

1. The cost for a room for one day at the Sheraton Inn will be \$54.00, not for each person.
2. Included in this Road Block are the forms for registering at the Sheraton, and with the 703rd Reunion Committee who will send you a letter of information and duplicate registration forms by January 15, 1994. They are to remind you to submit them if you have not already done so. REGISTER EARLY!

The last we knew was that Bee Goodrich (Hq) was very ill. Merle and she were missed in "Indy", but they recently got to venture out, and took in a show in Branson!

"Bee and I just returned from a short visit with Fred and Georgia Hunt enroute to Branson, Mo.---My progress report to all our members is that the facilities at the Sheraton are excellent with several shopping malls within walking distance. I am sure all will be pleased. The Andy Williams Show selected for our entertainment is outstanding, a real crowd pleaser. It was one of several shows we attended while in Branson. ---It rates a big 10!

Fred and Georgia have done an outstanding job in preparing for your coming. All members will be proud of what they have accomplished. Fred is getting several requests for information on the reunion.

Give our best to all the 703rd members in your area when you see them."

Merle and Dee Goodrich (Hq.)

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

5-17-94 Tuesday 9:00 A.M. Poolside Coffee with further info on events of day.

5-18-94 Wednesday 9:00 A.M. General Business Meeting. 3:00 P.M. Theater

5-19-94 Thursday 8:00 P.M. Banquet

703rd Tank Destroyer Battalion Association
Annual Membership for 1994

Please send \$10 for membership and volunteer \$10 for the quarterly Road Block to I.B. Wagon seller, Treasurer, 320 W. Walnut Bowie, TX 76230

When you include a note with your check with news, suggestions and questions, it enhances friendships and strengthens our association.

Dorothy O'Connor Wishes Us Well
540 Ash Drive, Windsor Locks, CT 06096
"I appreciate so much receiving the Road Block, and reading about so many of the men I have heard about and known through the years.

My husband, Clifford [B] was in the 703rd and very proud to be. He had many friends in the battalion from around this area of Connecticut with whom he kept in touch until his death in August, 1990.

There were many stories when they all got together for reunions. [See p. 7]

Thanks again for the memories."

LET'S GET ON THAT BUS !

We call for the men and women of the 703rd from the valley of the Monongahela, to get on that group bus that hauls folks out of Charleroi to the great shows in Branson, Missouri regularly.

Louis and Frances Guerra (Rcn-Hq) 1003 Shady Avenue, Charleroi, PA 15022 412 483 7314 called me, 11-9-93, and told me about that bus. He was going to go to "Indy" with John Strahoski (C), but "Doc" smothered that. They'll make Springfield, "betcha"! The battalion wants to see as well, Sam Backus, L. Dale Hamilton, Wassel Kosylo, Don Malone, and Louis Charubee, our men of that area, on that bus with their wives .

Frances Guerra was called by Kathleen Cerrito (C) because the Road Block led her to believe that Frances was from Mere, Wiltshire. Kathleen had given her hand to Joe there. Frances was Louis' second marriage. His first wife was from Nottingham. We hope Kathleen and Frances become friends.

Lou, retired over a decade ago, having spent his working years in the steel mills. He'll send us some pictures for the Road Block as well as the list of men from "the valley" that were in Reconnaissance and Headquarters Company. While in Hq. Co. his contact with our battalion C.O. was a pleasant memory. Did Strahoski latch onto Joe Sholtis yet? Thanks Lou. We like your get up and go!

TAKE GOOD CARE OF HER, JOE!

Lorraine Novak (Rcn) is recuperating from open heart surgery performed over the labor day weekend when we were in Indianapolis. Please let Joe and Lorraine know that we care, too!
3810 Jay Lane, South Rolling Meadow, IL 60008

"Where the Hell Are Ya!"

Al Locke (Hq), 3608 Morganford Rd., St. Louis, MO. 63116. We sure hope you're O.K. Ed Hoy (Rcn,Hq) 4627 Vista Dr., Cottonwood, AZ 86326, 602 646 9168, is gunning for you. Please let Ed know where he can reach you.

REMEMBER THEM?

Fred Hunt (Hq) received a letter from: Thomas E. Collins (A) Rte. 1 Box 86 Youngsville, LA 70592. Recall him? Let Fred know!

The widow of Franklin H. Carr (Recon) read our Letter To The Editor of a McMinnville, TN newspaper and called Georgia Hunt. She wants to contact "Recon" men. Let Edward C. Hoy (Recon-Hq), 4627 Vista Dr., Cottonwood AZ 86326 or Fred Hunt know if you recall Carr.

Relayed Via I.B.

I.B. met Paul and Edna Clark (A,Hq) in Ft. Worth who were there with S.W. Chapter of the 3rd Armored planning the reunion for '96.

Mary Balmes is doing well after surgery. All else is at the ready with John (A) who sends his regards.

Russ Steele (Hq. 33rd AR) signed for the Road Block. At a Council of Arm'd Divs. in Louisville he visited with Ernie DeSota (wife sadly ill), Bill Edie, the Riensches, and Hannemanns. Russ was told that Haynes Dugan's wife is well below par. Russ planned on having lunch with the McIntyres, Kistners and Gosses late in October. He sends best wishes to all.

Dave Brewster (A) down East in Salem, MA., started another hitch with us and sends his best.

Sam Backus (C) hopes to see us in Springfield. Len Marchewka's (C) checking out moved him as it did so many of us. Sam's medical problems kept him from us in "Indy".

We've run into George Scruggs (Hq.), outside an O.T.B. office in Tucson, handicapping the bangtails. On a winning day listen to him crow! He helps the American Legion at the V.A. Hospital, and will be with us in Phoenix in the Fall of 1994.

John Erwin (Hq) and Ed Hoy (Rcn,Hq) recently spent two hours on the phone. Fifty years have gone by since that hunt for the division water point was assigned them by Sydney S. Smith (A,Hq). John read Ed's version of the story as your editor told it in the September, 1993, Road Block, and he wants to tell his own version.

"After being assigned at a bivouac Ed and I moved out and returned after two hours to find the outfit gone! From that point on we were lost, and Ed's account is pretty accurate. [Running into the enemy, finding they were in a darkening vale and neat village].

When we stopped at a French home, the man and his wife came out to greet us. We both kidded each other later recalling how we were hugged by both the wife and the MAN! And her part of it wasn't half bad! We had a very fine meal that night and a nice comfortable place to sleep. After a good breakfast, we thanked them and started back.

After driving hard and fast for three hours, we met a column of M-4's. The C.O. in the lead tank, a big, mean-looking Lt. Col. asked where the H--we had been. I pointed to the rear, 'Way back there!' He replied, 'You're wrong Sgt. You were way up there. You are now seventy miles deep in enemy territory!' As we moved out I told him not to worry what was ahead of him, because we had cleared it out for him.

When we found the 703rd late that afternoon, Col. Showalter was the first person we saw. He just shook his head and said, 'I am sure glad you two made it back. You used up more airtime in the while you were gone than the BBC (English Radio) has in the last year.'

Those M-4's could not have been from the 3rd Armored; nobody in the 3rd Armored could have been that ugly!"

THE ROAD BLOCK AT FLERON, BELGIUM 9/8/44

Dick and Ruth Langenveld (B) came through with letters and pictures. [See p.7]

The other photograph is of German General H. Heinriche in the staff car in which he was killed near Fleron, Belgium. Dick and his crew were on a road block near an airfield, possibly in Liege, toward which the General was headed with propaganda pamphlets. Without any idea his enemy had come that far, the General drew fire and it cost him.

About a week later while positioned in an apple orchard, Langenveld was "pinked" in his right arm during a German counterattack checked with the help of some tanks. He made it till mid-April when just near the Elbe River near the autobahn, a sniper's round damaged his left leg badly enough so that he was laid up in hospitals for three years, and needs basic prosthetics lifetime.

Dick and Ruth will try very hard to come to our reunion next Spring. We want you there to share the good times with us all.

BREINIG, GERMANY

October 12, 1944

I do not like the city of Breinig.

I do not like the people there.

Breinig pears are bitter tasting,

The apples are rotted

On the ground

I sometimes walk the streets of Breinig,

Sometimes scrounge in homes abandoned,

Do not sleep at midnight

While our guns, brutal sounding

Level Aachen to the ground.

If I were a poet like Santayana

I'd write an ode to Aachen.

How I smile in wind-swept Breinig

While our guns are serenading

And Aachen burns.

Smile at me, you pretty lady,

Beg for chocolate, Nazi child.

I have no smile for pretty lady,

Have no chocolate, Nazi child.

I.B. Wagonseller (B,C)

SOME SOLDIERS WORK, SOME PLAY!

On 10-30/31-44 the battalion, and the division prepared for a drive to the Rhine River, but at the same time training, equipment, reinforcements, assignments to task forces in contact with the enemy to the north and east, indirect firing, training with the new M-36's, and socializing of various sorts were the action. Our battalion bases were in Busbach, Breinig, Breinigerheide, and Hahn.

"B" Co. fired enough rounds so that the Bn CO ordered "C" Co. to relieve them. On 10/30.44, from 0600-1800 "A" Co. expended 266 rds. For the same time period, "C" Co. fired 288 rds. On 10/31/44, 1 Plat each, A+C, fired counterbattery missions, 10 volleys, 40 rds/plat. No further fire from enemy guns. For the day "A" Co. expended 234 rds. 90mm HE, "C" Co., 330 rds.

Due to an accidentally discharged weapon on 10/30/44, Otto Strahm, "A" Co. Motor Sgt. became a casualty.¹

10-30-44

Last night was the second of the bright, moonlit nights we had in Germany. Enemy planes flew high above us, leaving a white, vaporous streak, and intricate patterns. Twice a plane ventured close to Breinig. At first only one .50 cal. MG fired upwards, its tracers seemed to float lazily across the sky. Then others reverberated with a full Breinig symphony filling the sky with red, colliding tracers.

Pvt. Weir of Lubbock, TX and I were returning to quarters from a showing of, "Hail The Conquering Hero" (Preston Sturges). While the AA was firing we found shelter beside a Breinig home. We heard the brief whiz and dull thud of AA shells landing nearby.

10-31-44

The last few nights have been unusually merry. Al Rodensky (Moldy) has been making regular trips to the Stolberg brewery filling five gallon cans with good beer.

Our nightly program began with "Moldy" singing, "Always In The Way", with a telephone rendition to the platoons on the

Tiger Network. Lt. Hendricksen played the guitar, Snuffy Smith the mandolin, Whiskey Snyder the accordion.

Then Hendricksen gives a Cowboy Slim Ravehant imitation in song:

I was laying in the gutter
All covered up with beer
With pretzels in my whiskers
I thought the end was near.

Then came that glorious army
To save me from the curse
Everybody bust a gut
And sing the second verse.

Hallelujah, hallelujah!
Throw a nickel on the drum.
Save another drunken bum
O, hallelujah, hallelujah
And you'll be saved.

AMEN.

Sometimes Gosch would join in with his violin. Other who joined the chorus were Shields, Galante, and my two delightful friends, Kosylo and Papineau.

WHAT THE TAPE RECORDER PICKED UP IN INDIANAPOLIS!

A Pat On The Back For Fred!

All the while Fred Hunt (Hq.) has been conceiving a better way to find the "strays" in our outfit, there has been one sure result to each of his moves,---he ends up with more work! At first we were going to stuff envelopes with a letter to editors all over the U.S. of A. Then he decided that we came to Indianapolis for pleasure, not to stuff envelopes, thus he would do it himself. He justifies carrying that load with good sound reason, and this is the way he tried to convince us at the reunion!

V.F.W. and American Legion published computer stats insist that half the men in the U.S. Army in 1945 are probably alive, today. Therefore, since there were about 6-700 men from the 703rd who survived the

war, the 150 or more who are strays sure would help us have even more great reunions than ever if we went to work and found them! He has backed up his reasoning by sending inquiries galore. Join him, and remake the contacts you once had. Let Fred know how you made out.

Grateful Survivors

Regina Lee read her husband Irving's poem at the banquet in Indianapolis, grateful for the division's role in the liberation of the Nordhausen Concentration Camp.

After eight years we met again,
It was on a cold day with some rain,
But your heart was very warm,
And your loving wives added much charm.

During those many long years
Always remember the liberation with tears
Countless times from God for help I sought
That some day you will know my thoughts.

Loving God answered the prayers today,
And from the depths of my heart I can say
The tributes to you are memorized in my head,
Our stay here, too short for all to be said.

Many thanks to you, Bill, Mike and Russ,
You did the impossible liberating us.
No rest, day or night driving further East,
To destroy forever the Nazi beast.

You strained in courage during the war,
Brought an end to years of pain and sore,
Rescuing thousands from living hell,
With joy we could hear the freedom bell.

We met to dedicate the Holocaust Museum
Hoping to continue our warm relations.

During the short time we met,
Our friendship was emotion set.

We'll always feel your warm heart,
This was noted from the start.
Irving and I wish you, your family the best,
Good health, happiness and lots of rest.
God bless you with love and thanks .

Rocco and the "Medics"

On the 27th of December of 1944 the German attack into "The Bulge" hardly was crawling. Orders at battalion headquarters were issued for the return of the battalion to the Third Armored, and for preparation for the drive to cut off what was left of the German forces in Belgium.

3A was still with the 82nd Airborne, and suffering barrages of mortar fire. Ted Michalowski (3A) was wounded and evacuated, lost to the battalion for two months, and Rocco Mantro (3A) so shaken, "--utterly exhausted" that he was ordered into an ambulance that would take him back to a forward rest area. It looked like it would be Stalag #--or a German forward medical station when the ambulance was stopped by the enemy. An officer saw only wounded and permitted it to move towards its objective.

After two or three days at the rest area a "Doc" looked to see if Rocco could extend his hands without overly shaking, then asked him if he was ready to go back. The response was prompt, "Hell, no!" The "Doc" asked him to again extend his both hands that were not shaking and challenged Rocco, "Would you like to be in the army of occupation for a few years?" The soldier declined, and said he preferred to go back to his old outfit.

Next morning they were lined up and faced by a callous Colonel Doctor. "You aren't much as soldiers!" In response, a sprout of the 28th Infantry jumped forward, and spoke up, "I wish you had been up there on patrol with us!" The Colonel did not speak to the lad, but to all in line, "I'll send you back for a few days rest."

To Rocco's surprise it was a long way back, to a "beach" hospital in France. There a Doctor examined him and found a small fracture, "No more combat for you!" All of us would have agreed with Rocco, "G O O D, Sir!"

Supplying the forward elements and guarding trains were Rocco's chores for the remainder of his tour.



Francis N. Bangs Jr.
Henri-Chapell Cemetery, Belgium



The "Spearhead" Flag
Holocaust Museum, Washington, D.C.



Paul and Edna Clark with I.B. Ft.Worth



Inez Wagonseller, Frank Miller



General H. Heinriche, K.I.A.
at road block, Fleron, Belgium.

Breinig, Germany. 10/44.

Ed Goodhurst, F. Farny, Dick Langerveld
Cliff O'Connor, P. Petrekovitch, Bud Fyock.



John and Laura Irwin



Minnick, Locke, Irwin (Hq.) Mere '44

OVER THE QUOTA!

We left the Third Armored in Hastenrath
And headed South over icy paths,
Through fog and snow, there was no sun,
To Bütgenbach to join "The Big Red One".

Our task force—a platoon of T.D.'s
Added to one battalion of infantry.
To cover our front, we were too few
But the Colonel knew what we had to do.

Off to our front were marshes and fen,
The Krauts had no way of crossing them.
So he ordered us forward-- to attack...
To drive the German forces back.

In four short hours we had our line
Exactly to that Colonel's design.
A marsh to our left then one T.D.,
And a squad or two of infantry.

Another marsh or quarry or fen,
Then the same troop alignment over again.
Marshes, then troops, and marshes once more,
We were spread over 3 miles or maybe four.

We had for support in our rear quarter,
Some artillery and heavy mortar.
Late in the night, the counterattack came
"Screaming meemies" made the houses flame.

Then noise--their armor moving into the fray,
Our thinly held line had to bar their way.
In each T.D. we had just two men,
The rest of our crews were our outposts then.

Charlie 23 was manned by Frank Glod,
Clinton Reid, and a "Prayer to God."
They heard the tanks approach in the night,
A spark from a tank appeared in his sight.

Reid fired toward that faint dim spark,
And a brilliant light came through the dark.
That first round scored--a tank was hit,
And from its flames the night was lit.

Armored carriers, trucks and tanks,
All fully armed, headed for our ranks.

Reid kept on firing, A.P. and H.E.
Roared through the night at our enemy.

Then, just as the battle turned our way,
Fate's fickle finger came into play.
While loading, Frank Glod had a slip,
The gun's recoil shattered his left hip.

With no one to load, the gunner, Reid
Scrambled, loaded, then back in his seat,
Then search the terrain for an enemy tank
Only to discover, he had been outflanked.

The Germans had, in hasty flight
Raced toward the unit on our right.
They pierced their line and reached the town.
A reserve unit there knocked two tanks down.

The attack was broken, they raced away,
And now fate again came up our way.
Reid in his scanning saw a tank quite clear
And blew it up with a shot to its rear.

With the battle over, I recommended that he
Should get a medal for bravery.
The papers that I processed and sent ahead,
The reply I got really stopped me dead!

"You're in British control" as per accord,
You can't recommend an American award!
I rewrote the papers, why should I barter?
I asked he become, "Knight of the Garter"!

Wheels grind so slowly, and after some days,
We were no longer covered by British ways.
We were back under U.S. control.
I submitted another request for that soul.

It was my sacred duty to return to the pen,
And write up his recommendation again.
"Legion of Merit"? D.S.C."? "Silver Star"?
Please tell me the medal to pin on my star.

Then finally after week, after week
They sent an answer, I was too dumb to speak!
They awarded the Bronze Star, lowest of all.
To this man who made dozens of enemy fall.

The reason given, I can't accept one iota,
Our platoon, already, was"-over our quota."
Of all of our heartbreaks, this was worst.
In a countdown of medals, it was our first.

Purple hearts, yes, we had received many,
But Bronze Star or Silver, there wasn't any.
So I sent back to H.Q. a short, bitter poem,
"Since we're over the quota, please send me
home"! "Hap" Paulson (A,C)
[From the 3rd Armored Division Newsletter,
December, 1989.]

LONG LIVE THE QUEEN II

Into the turn of the year (1944), the men
had seen much of South and Southwest England.
Men went to St. Agnes for anti-aircraft
training and then pass it on to us. Others
went to Cook and Baking School. Clarence Gann
(A) and Don McKiernan (A) had a week in
London in a combat swimming segment. We
fired the 3", at Kimmeridge near Bournemouth.
It was a scene to remember, the practice
rounds whipping through moving targets and
skipping over the cliff edge into the sea.
The destroyer crews enjoyed the firing, days
well spent. Our crews had to do well to stay
alive if and when there would be enemy
targets. A high-light in training was the
firing at Minehead, Somerset on Christmas
week. Our second platoon destroyers went up
by rail, and rolled back the 65 miles in con-
voy. About 237 rounds went through the two
bores. It was at Minehead, on the south shore
of the Bristol Channel, that a fine taste of
English hospitality would be enjoyed.

The nine months the men spent in England
reflected their lives at home. In describing
the social relationships of the men there
must be kept in mind the premise that most of
the draftees had one overriding thought. They
wanted "out" even as they were drafted and
trained in the United States! Many of their
lives had been shaped in the comfort of a
fairly well defined socio-economic environ-
ment, and with personal limitations which
tended to make them withdraw from new social

relationships. These young men had enjoyed
learning that they had much in common with
men from similar backgrounds as their own,
but, socially, were far from welcoming experi-
ences outside their world. When in England
most of these men hardly did more than fre-
quent public places, socialize with other
Americans, or enjoy the company of English
women "doing their bit!" A few made the most
of enjoying the culture and hospitality of a
people close to war.

The training films that were directed to
maintain health proved effective. Neverthe-
less three men caught venereal diseases while
we were in England. Romance with the Land
Army women was relief from army boredom.
Promises were made in fragile sincerity
between men and women. War taught that
promises will be rarely kept Men are only
passing through, and so the tensions of
loneliness found some comfort in the flight
of making believe. The laughter of the lads
as they gossiped about the Non Com who was
writing to his wife and receiving feminine
gifts from her to give the wife of the on-
duty, English Non Com her husband was seeing
regularly,--was not too rare. It was one
example of what a friendship might mean.
There were at least two marriages and a
divorce in England involving the men of our
battalion.

Continued Next Issue

MEANDERING THOUGHTS

Camp Polk, Early Spring, 1942

Basic training was shortened to 6 wks.
It included not only drill led by a sneering
cadre, its purported results to be discipline
under fire, health stressing prevention of
social disease, physical conditioning via
hiking, an introduction to range firing, the
sense of power with a Springfield rifle at
200 yds., and hints that equipment was more
important than people.

There was the six-week-life without
women, and when the recruit saw one in a red
dress, he anticipated the end of basic train-
ing. The men read their mail from home, and

could not help comparing the environments, natural and human. Our officers and cadre compounded the senselessness of "the right way and the army way", "hurry up and wait", and the army did not have to train us to stretch any assignment up till lunchtime.

The recruit, early on, might begin to wonder how he might fit his civilian occupation to his future role in the army. Most kept in mind the danger of combat, and the military roles they felt farthest from it. They sensed early that their civilian records would be perused sincerely, yet square pegs would have to fit in round holes. The draftee might try assert himself, but most did not. After all the goal was to man crews of fighting men. When basic training was over some recruits renewed efforts to get jobs closest to suit them, pride in advancement through promotion, increased pay, and recognition.

That first chance to get to the P.X. was an event to really enjoy, to chew a candy bar, munch a piece of pie and drink coffee in a regular cup. But not in one instance. When a recruit asked for a cup of coffee, the young woman in red coldly asked, "Southern or Northern?" "What's the difference", the soldier asked. Surly was her languid reply, "Southern is strong, Northern, weak!

With the end of basic training some of the recruits might have been shifted to schools to learn specific skills, Morse code radio, and more skilled echelon training in medicine, electronics, or armored mechanics et al. Would-be cooks and heavy machinery aficionados looked forward to refuges from future combat. More refined areas of weaponry were taught away from the battalion.

There were more opportunities for recreation at the camp, team sports, boxing.

There were dances at the camp. Service organizations from communities always sent dance partners too few. The fellows from eastern cities would hasten to corner the lovely youngster with the flair of the jitterbug. Often there were more than five fellows dancing with one girl till she had to have a "coke" to ease the ache in her toes.

There was that first night in Leesville, V.D. films, off limit areas, social contacts with a cleric's daughter and family, or the invitation to prostitution, the getting "a little drunk and landin' in jail", being escorted to a metal cell by an M.P., getting back to camp for reveille, missing a night's sleep, and not the very worst for wear-- of course, soon looking for a weekend pass!

World War I in World War II

The British

At the Battle of the Somme, July 1, 1916, the British casualties amounted to 419,654, the French nearly 200,000, and "that battle, in a sense, is not ended yet."

The true memorial "is intellectual and literary, and it turns on the revelation, from which the British had hitherto been shielded by their navy, that war could threaten the manhood of a whole nation. This realization was to have important political after-effects during the Second World War: On one occasion when General George C. Marshall was in England, pouring forth the most cogent and logical arguments in favor of a prompt invasion of the Continent, Lord Cherwell remarked to him, 'It's no use, you are arguing against the casualties on the Somme.' The same realization was to color British strategic thinking, both official and academic, about what sort of wars she should fight. For the cause of the defeat on the first day of the Somme needed no analysis: anyone could understand that when a near majority of the soldiers committed to an attack are killed or wounded in its opening moments, the remainder will be too shocked and disoriented to continue." John Keegan, The Face of Battle , 280-281.

NO WONDER WE GRIPED!

"Americans--wage(d) war in 1941-45 (because) they hated Japan, racism helped, disliked Germany, evaded rationing, resisted mobilization and enjoyed wartime

prosperity.--(D)espite America's historical unpreparedness for war its resources, more than its resourcefulness, guaranteed victory.-----

Although the 'arsenal of democracy' produced the jeep, it failed until late in the war to produce a plane to outfly the 1940-vintage Japanese Zero or to produce a tank or gun to match German equipment.--(T)he Army connived with industry to keep producing the Sherman tank, known to armored personnel who survived it as the Ronson because of its weak firepower and high inflammability."

Aachen, October '44.

The leaves on the birch and hickory trees have turned a November brown; soon the snow will come, and hide these ugly and mud-spattered streets, cover the bean stalks and Jack up there, fighting his giant.

The geese have flown south to the Mediterranean, beautiful flying geese from Lapland, land of elves and dwarfs and fairy tales I wish were true. Some of our machine gunners, impulsive or hungry, fired at the geese, but not one fell.

Like a shepherd descending from the mountains I came upon Aachen, broad streets vacant of traffic leading downward to the heart of the city in the mist in the valley, a skeleton, a city of debris, fine homes shattered, cathedrals burning.

A woman is pushing a cart of belongings, a child carrying a sister too young to walk, children of Nietzsche, Carlylean philosophy, heros and hero worshippers. Here are Charlemagne, knights in armor, Goethe, folk tales and fairy tales I wish were true.--Hitler--National Socialism.

I see these skeletons of past and present in a city that looks beautiful from the hilltop, but its heart beats under bare, broken bones, an appropriate proof of the power and fury of Third Armored artillery serenades.

I have my eyes on the sky's brightness,
And a devil's gleam within these eyes.
Shout, "Glory. This is glory!
We're alive and Aachen burns."

One would think I was not civilized
To see me charmed by Aachen's burning,
To see me frown at pretty ladies,
Or speak gruffly to a child,
I who love the poems of Goethe,
I who am the father of a child.

Yet I know a Wiseman who knew the sky's
brightness, long ago.

Do not be alarmed, O Wiseman, if my fate
Should be the light that guides you to me,
Somewhere between Aachen and Cologne,
or further on. I.B.

AS IF YOU WANTED TO KNOW !

Military Executions in World War II

"During World War II the British army carried out forty death sentences (thirty-six for murder, three for mutiny and one for treason); the French army executed at least 102 (Losses of certain French archives prevent an exact total). The United States armed forces handed down 763 death sentences. Only 146 persons were executed (seventy-five for murder, fifty-two for rape, eighteen for murder and rape, . Not one death sentence was carried out for "political crimes". German Army statistics show at least 9,732 executions till the end of 1944. The American, French, and English armed forces total was about 300 executions, while the German armed forces executed 519 in the first thirteen months of the war alone! " An estimated 7000-8000 death sentences were handed down by the German military courts from January to April, 1945. Most of these sentences were carried out very quickly, if not on the spot. By late 1944 accurate reporting to the central armed forces statistical office of death sentences carried out was five to six months behind."

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ONLY CHARLIE'S HEAD MOVES!

Bill Wagoner (A) has had several visits with Charlie Markeveys (Hq) at a fine convalescent home in Bristol, Conn. Charlie's in a chair, the nurse-call button always in his hands. His fingers and his head move but slightly. His condition has lasted for years, and Bill thinks it's M.S.

"He's alert, talking of the old days and his buddies in the service. He and his wife are joyous when I visit.--- It gets uncomfortable, seeing him in such shape. He struggles to laugh, but it sure makes him happy. He points to the Road Blocks next to him." Bill read one to him on his last visit.

We hope Bill will let us know Charlie's wife's name, and relay our best wishes to her and Charlie. Thank you, Bill and Kathy. C.Markeveys 131 Ivy Dr. Bristol, CT 06010

*AFTER THE HAPPIEST OF HANUKAHS, HAVE
A VERY JOYOUS CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR*

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