



# 703<sup>rd</sup> Road Block



### Stragglers in the 703rd ? GET IT UP !

Please pay your dues as of January 1 each year... It is not alone, the need to keep this association alive financially! It is the dues you pay that makes worthy friends alert for your concern, as you are concerned for them. We were part of what all of us want no more, -- wars. We need to give life to our association so that it represents that dream sought with strength, the goal for peace and respect for those who have to risk their lives. This is what your association seeks for us and the many no longer with us.

We ask most urgently that the many we send mailings who were in the 703rd, "Get up" that "sawbuck", that "tenspot" so as to maintain our helpful friendships.

We know January 1 can easily pass without your recalling its time to pay your dues. Please put it on your calendar and communicate with us. We want, very much to know how you are and what you're doing!

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St. Jean de Daye July 8, 1944  
49-14 N. Lat. 1-8 W. Long.

The sun was not what woke us in the wreck of that town,  
Nor the smell of young uprooted spuds and onions

In our garden of pillage.  
It was the "Thunderbolts" in the sky and their quartet of dips.

All morning it seemed, did they dip and run against a favorable sky barely a mile ahead of us,

And we could see the pinpoints of falling bombs, the flash of Jabo's slugs.

It was a quiet day after that and we held the roads.

As I looked at this body, stiffened,  
swollen half black and still,  
With an "Ace" beside me, with eagles on slim shoulders, near the "Panthers" of steel,  
We could not hate but wonder at the future's fruit.

His, its knee was gone, blended with red thigh, calf broken,  
Blended with the green-gray of the pant of world-molders.

The sun in the green leaves reflected like a grill on the exposed flesh of hip hole, grub and ant loot.

Souvenirs had been its gun, its clips, its ring. Slashed were its pockets.  
Its swollen head had locked the helmet till the strap lay buried in its neck.  
Its eyes were blue glass, its hair blonde, red dust its smile.

Think once of youth, love and lieder to sing  
Of hopes for good, though hate mind crooked.  
To Norman green he had come to wreck the western horde's might, but gave his life.

Cheers for an "Ace", and success to his brood.  
His fledglings had done it, a job well done.

But it had been a man, warm, my mother's heart where my own.

Place oil on the bolt, in the bore, replace the clip. Look to the sky, grin.  
\*\*\*\*\* 8/1944.\*\*\*\*\*

### TAPS

Bertice "Bert" L. Hennings (A)  
died June 9, 1991, at the Divine Savior Nursing Home in Portage, Wisconsin. Leo Wittler (A), Rte. #1 Box 174A, Warrens, WI 54666 sent the obituary. "Bert" was buried where he and Lucille lived in Poynette, 53955, with area

veterans participating. Surprisingly, Elmer Langbecker's, frau, Francis, not knowing he had been in Elmer's company, cared for him while "Bert" spent his last days at a nursing home. "Bert" had a Bronze Star and Purple Heart. He had been a farm-tenant for the Del Monte Corp. in Arlington for over 32 years. A son, daughter, three grandchildren, brother and sisters mourn his loss. Comrades of his in "A" Co. should tell us more about "Bert"! Please respond to us so that we can show our respect to Lucille more meaningfully.

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"SCHUTT'S CORNER"

8-16-91

Fellow Board Members:

These are my personal feelings and thoughts regarding the future of our association!

For financial reasons, we cannot continue to pay for costly services for non-paying members. Secondly, mailings to them are rarely acknowledged via correspondence or telephone to the association or any former member of the 703rd. The most recent surprise along with his check was from I.B.Wagonseller [See below].

With this issue of the Road Block, our second year of sending it to all members, we have to look at cost. We have not been able to lower mailing rates. Thus should we try continue publication for paying members only or continue sending it to all members as we "Go for broke"! We should make the choice at the division reunion in St. Louis.

I'll ask the board to approve that the next issue of the Road Block inform the non-payers that they may pay the membership now [\$10 dues, \$10 Voluntary for the Road Block] otherwise no mailing for non-dues paying names on the directory list.

As Secretary-Treasurer I would be remiss in my high salary duties if I did not inform you of these happenings. We can't operate as does the federal government, enlarging the deficit and paying the price to try keep the peace. A small business has to "cut the dead-wood". On top of being liquid, we certainly need a cash reserve for contingencies.

Let's see the color of your money, gentlemen. Get yourself the best our association can offer!

There'll be twenty three of us from the 703rd in St. Louis. Hope to see each and everyone there.

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A TEXAN'S TRIBUTE TO "HANK" I

I.B. Wagonseller (B) will be in St. Louis with many of us. He enjoys "Hap" Paulson's poetry in our newsletter. The news of "Hank" Boelma's death brought this memory of respect from a sportsman.

" I still have a crooked nose from a boxing bout with "Hank" Boelma at Indiantown Gap!"

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One Of A Kind--Don and Yolana (A)

"Dont tell me what your community owes you! Tell me what you are doing for and with your neighbors!" (J.F.K. ?)

One of our most youthful couples in "A" Co. continues to find California so much a blessing that they can't do enough for it. <sup>1</sup> The only way Don could top the volunteer activities of Yolana was to get two triples in one inning of a key seniors softball game in which his team lost 11-10!

Professionally, Don was on the staff at the Poughkeepsie, N.Y. "Y--", and at retirement he worked there with Senior Citizens. After three years in California, he's adding volunteer teaching in the elementary school. He hopes as many of us who can will pitch in and help work out our national domestic problems on a local level.

Living close enough to Camp Pendleton to really feel the enthusiasm of the folks for their Marines, Don recalled some brief experiences while he was in the third platoon. Of course, it was your editor who kept after him, and he came through as he always has.

Camp Polk-Basic Training

"One weekend I was playing catch with an orange in the company street in front of our tents, when, unexpectedly, Lt. Col. Yeomans and Gen'l. Gillem(?) appeared. We told them we did not have any athletic equipment. They were shocked and promised to get us softball bats, balls and other equipment, which they did."

DeRidder, Louisiana

"I went to DeRidder to attend church services at their Methodist Church. I was the first G.I. that Rev. and Mrs. Poole befriended. On my 22nd birthday in May, 1942,

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they gave me a party with Southern fried chicken and all the trimmings, including home made ice cream. During the Battle of the Bulge, I received a prayer missal with the following note: To Sgt. Don McKiernan, from your Deridder mother, Helen Poole."

Mojave Desert, California

"I always recall that trip into Pasadena, ice skating at the indoor rink, and on Joe Haselrick's birthday, my buddies gave him a party in a special room at the Pic 'n Whistle Restaurant."

"There was the Stage Door Canteen in Hollywood. I saw Eddie Cantor, danced with Binnie Barnes, Ann Miller, Linda Darnell's double, Beverly. I went out with Beverly, who promptly sent me big, autographed pictures of Betty Grable, Linda Darnell, Carole Landis, and Sonja Henie."

Liege, Belgium, 9/1944

"As our T.D.'s were passing through the city's main drag, I spotted a gorgeous girl in a bright sweater on the City Hall steps. We were still moving, and she came down the steps going our way. I asked my driver to stop. She climbed up onto the T.D., took a locket from around her neck and gave it to me. She kissed me, jumped from the T.D. and disappeared in the large crowd. Perhaps I reminded her of a sweetheart, a brother or friend. I mailed the gold locket home when I got the chance."

Bastille Day Track Meet in Frankfurt 7-14-45.

"----remember, I wrote you about my winning a medal In the Broad Jump-----".

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WHAT A GUY !!!

As happens so often, the people afflicted with dangerous illness seem to have been "strong as an ox!" But there it was, just the other day. There were tests and two surgical procedures separated by many days. My letter and Frank Miller's wishing Don McKiernan well, got quick responses. It took only three days after each of the operations, and he was on his feet, positive that it was playing softball, exercise and Yolana that helped him, and will quickly get him back in center field. What a guy!

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NICE TRY, SAM!

Sam (C) and Madeline Backus, 615 Thomas Lane, Greensburgh, Pa. 15601 send their best and hope to be with us at our reunion. Sam tried to get an address or telephone number for Wassel Kosylo (C) but heard he went to Florida. Can one of you locate Kosylo?

The V.A. is trying to help Sam with his leg, but the problem has reached his back and other leg. Thanks for a great try, Sam, and we are hoping other lads give you the glad hand. I'm confident Richard and Lydia Ligatti will keep giving you the good word!

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ARMANDO'S STILL COOKIN' !

Ernie and Audrey Coloura(C) visited "Tippy" Giovino (C) and that led to Ernie's joining our association. He has just renewed his membership on top of a fine note. His health sagged a bit last year and he needed a double bypass plus another operation. Good hearing from him! He has a request. We would like to have more like it so that we can help to reunite old friends. Give him a hand if you can !

"I would like to get the address or telephone number of S/Sgt. Joseph Ochol who lived in Connecticut."

Armando L. Giovino, 248 Pratt Street  
Mansfield, MA. 02048

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NEWS ABOUT OUR LADS !

Rocco Mantro (A) has handled illness well and will be looking for you at the division reunion in St. Louis.

"Manny" Finger (B) is having a rugged time of it. Bill Crochetiere (B) and John Czajkowski (B) told us "Manny" could use some encouragement from all of us.  
410 SE Second St., Apt.#119,  
Hallandale, FL. 33009

George Piepiora (A) is wrestling with an awesome siege of arthritis. Jack Moriarty, for once in his life has a good word for "Cazimir" George, believes we should drop him a line at  
1118 SummerSt. Weymouth, MA. 02188.

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You're Older Than You Think Dept. !

"An ROTC cadet whom I commissioned at the U. of Dayton while I was Prof. of Military Science, 1963-5, is now a full Colonel and the C.O. of the 3rd Armored Div. Artillery in Desert Storm! WHAT A DELIGHTFUL COINCIDENCE!!!--"

W.E. Showalter (C.O.)

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Item From The 3rd Armored Division Newsletter June, 1991

Philip Hallabrin (Hq.) "--had emergency surgery on 2-9-91 for an aneurysm of the aorta.--hospitalized for 11 days and slowly regaining his strength. Hopefully by September he will be back to normal."

68 Westgate Dr., Mansfield, OH. 44906

From The Bug House 8/17/91

"Doc" tells me it will be weeks before I'll either walk normal distances or need surgery. It's nerves pinched by adhesions from previous operations. My stupid back gave out on me again, as well.

"Ted" Michalowski (A) has bleeding ulcers, in the hospital where they cauterized the largest and put him on a "Gawd-awful" diet!

Frank Woolner (A) broke his shoulder in a fall just a week ago. He had an operation, and feels it will get better. Machines wear out!

I heard from Len Straub. He's O.K...

"Al" Miller (A) called. He says he's O.K., but doesn't see all that well. He says Imogene is doing fairly well. She's had Parkinson's Disease for years.

Frank, Marge, + Diablo III  
"The Miller Troupe"

F. Miller	Michalowski	Woolner
Box 131	3413 N.Division	Box 62
Hurley, N.Y.	Davenport, IA.	Shrewsbury, MA
12443	52806	01545

Al Miller 203 W.14th, Lamar, MO. 64759

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WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?

(From Diablo III in "The Bug House")

"Most of today's soldiers ("Sandbox" on the desert) would have no idea what it could have been like in W.W.II! Their equipment was fantastic--the Iraqi were pounded--demoralized--mostly war weary from a face-to-face stupid war of attrition against Iran in a mostly vast desert, on top of being underfed, thirsty, without means of communication--"blind". No comparison--we had, up until Nov.'44, the best gun, 3" in the whole attacking forces and the least armor. The opposition were actually the better trained--only they were not allowed to do anything except by direct orders. We did anything we thought would work in the given instance and to hell with the training manual. Often we didn't know what we were doing, so how could the enemy figure us out?.. We had numbers. I'll wager we lost more tanks than the Krauts by far, but we always came up with more, mass-produced, while theirs were individually produced, in bomb-crippled factories, rough getting to the scene of action because of our air superiority. But their training and indoctrination held up for a long time."

Also in this "Gulf Sandbox" War, the clothes, rations, transport were ideal-- I can distinctly remember nearly freezing to death in the Bulge-- we got overshoes the day after that fracas when we didn't need them anymore. I froze my feet very badly in that deal.--

Also we were a civilian army. The Sandbox soldiers are professionals. There is little to compare--mostly contrast.

WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?

Frank Miller (A)

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The Ardennes Campaign

Your editor had a great "gabfest" with Bill Crochetiere (B) and John Czajkowski (B) the other morning. That is still the best way to get "yarns", and I was only sorry that I did not turn on a tape recorder. Nevertheless, I noted down enough to interweave what they told me with what is in the battalion records. As you read what your editor wrote below, ask yourself what you can add. Let us know!

## 703rd Road Block-5

In November, 1944, Aachen was still not ours, and the Stolberg Corridor that was to be the center of the drive planned by Bradley's and Hodges' forces to Düren, the Roer River Dams and Cologne--the pursuit to end the war by Christmas--was stalled!

For the 703rd it was time for replacements, men back from hospitals or leave, supplies, training and some M-36's with guns that could better compete with "Heinie 88's". There were to be about 90 days in German towns, Breinig, Busbach, and Breinigerheide due south of Stolberg. There would be action with task forces "up the corridor" to probe for advantageous jump-offs toward our objectives to the East.

A 3rd Armored Task Force attack on Dec. 9th had "B" Co. 703rd along. Late on Dec 13th after some effective shooting and the loss of two guns and an M-20, the whole company was back in Breinig.

Mid-afternoon, Dec. 17th, a day after the Ardennes Campaign ("The Bulge") was begun by the Germans, the 703rd learned that Jerry had penetrated the Vth Corps to their south after a heavy air attack. Moved out of the 3rd Armored and the VIIth Corps, the 703rd was assigned to the Vth Corps reserve. The battalion was armed with 28 M-36's, 12 in "A", 5 in "B" and 11 in "C" Co.

On Dec. 18th, the 2nd Platoon, "A" Co. was put in a task force to evacuate an army field hospital and next morning reported contact with the enemy.

Now came enemy contact assignments, "A" Co. with the 16th Inf. Regt. and "C" Co. with the 26th of the 1st Inf. Div.--, "B" Co. would be in reserve, till Dec. 20th, then moved over to the 82nd Airborne at Werbemont. By next day "B" Co. would have 11 M-36's operational. The 3rd Plat. "A" Co. would take their place.

On Dec 19th, a section of "A" Co.'s 1st platoon was in position at a road junction where they were bombed by a German plane. Sgt. Barbalinardo and T.D. driver Joseph Olsen were killed, Larry Bretschneider(?) and "Howie" O'Connor wounded.

On the 20th, "C" Co. lost a man wounded by artillery and their 3rd Plat. claimed knocking out an M-5 tank.

Next day in support of the 26th Inf. Regt. "C" Co.'s C.P. was hit by artillery and mortar fire, suffering 2 wounded, with 4 vehicles damaged. Their 3rd Plat. destroyed a Mk-5. Each of the Reconnaissance Co. platoons

was in direct support of a company.

From Dec. 22-23 "C" Co.'s 2nd Plat. wrecked an enemy strong point, and the 3rd Plat. claimed a Mk IV. Cpl. White gunned out a Mark V plus a half track. Stites, liaison, reported "B" Co. in road blocks. American forces had yielded St. Vith to the Germans.

"C" Co. and the 26th Inf. Regt. were hit hard, losing an M-20 and a T.D. The 3rd Plat. "A" Co. was alerted for a possible move to the "C" Co. sector. The Bn. C.O. visiting "C" Co. positions, sent maintenance up for two M-36's. Stites, from "B" Co., reported their 1st Plat. near Trois Ponts with the 82nd A.B.

With that platoon, Bill Crochetiere was in position with two T.D.'s to prevent enemy penetration along a river between Trois Ponts and Grand Halleux, Belgium. With careful observation, he estimated the range of fire so well that the enemy withdrew from their advance. The next day at 1800, on the 23rd of Dec., the enemy concentration of armor to breach his position appeared so overwhelming that Crochetiere decided he had better get into position before his destroyers had to face frontal armor. Surprisingly on the attack, he was quickly in position. His gunner, A. A. Morrie, who had so successfully fired the day before, now destroyed two enemy tanks, and the enemy withdrew. During the action, enemy mortar or artillery tree burst fragments found their way into the turret and killed Morrie at his sight. Also reported wounded, but remaining in action that day were Bengston, Bailey, Johnson and French.

With the above action, the report on the 24th included that a 1st Plat. "A" Co. T.D. was damaged by artillery fire with no one hurt, and lost an M-36 to a barrage.

A Focke-Wulf 109 was downed and it was confirmed that Matusavige, a Hq. Co. trucker, had shot it down near Eupen. A Colonel reported that the trucker was the only man firing.

For the next seven days there was little action, though there was movement and shifting attachments near Werbemont. On the 28th, "A" Co. reported that Ted Michalowski had been wounded. On the 30th and 31st, the 3rd Plat. "B" Co. assisted in tank-infantry and T.D. coordinating exercises.

Then, with the Allies feeling the Germans were contained, a counteroffensive was planned and the 703rd was returned to the command of the 3rd Armored.

STOIC-MAYBE-SILENT-YES

There weren't many extroverts among the  
officers of Company "A".  
The gadabouts and ribald ones were quickly  
sent away.  
Ruff was lost in an accident, O'Connell was  
shipped out.  
Junior Cooper was soon dispatched,  
And I was transferred out.  
Lou Cappelle, the jolly giant,  
With his slogan, "Let her rip!"  
Was banished to headquarters,  
to button up his lip.  
While solid, steady MacIntyre,  
And the reticent Henderson (Ray),  
Captain Cole and Wissing  
were the ones who got to stay.  
They were a stolid, silent group,  
of that you need no proof.  
But the quietest was Wissing,  
So reserved-he seemed aloof!  
If shyness was a virtue,  
then Jack would be a saint.  
He never seemed to raise his voice  
not even in complaint.  
Oh! How he tried to "father" me,  
my exuberance to rein.  
He described me as too youthful.  
He'd repeat the same refrain.  
"An officer, you'll never be,  
You cannot toe the line."  
But if a platoon sergeant you were,  
I'd pray that you'd be mine!"  
He married while in service,  
and when he took his wife,  
It must have been the first time  
that excitement touched his life.  
He plodded on quite stoically,  
No highlight to his day.  
Then fate allowed him a moment  
to shine--It happened this way.  
The English preparing a parade  
asked the U.S. to join in.  
So they scheduled a competition  
and the finest troops would win.  
A three day trip to London.  
A place in the parade.  
And to each unit commander,  
a special treat was made.  
A dinner with Prince Phillip  
in the palace-Buckingham-  
The finest T.D. unit,  
in the test was mine, by damn.  
Then some pinhead staff decided,  
"We can't send Hap, he's a disgrace!

I was transferred to headquarters  
and Wissing took my place.  
He was wined and dined and feted,  
in a truly regal style.  
He came back aglow from London,  
his face wreathed in a smile.  
It was a golden memory,  
he'd recall the rest of his days.  
But foreshortened were those memories  
He was captured and killed at Falaise.

"Hap" Paulson (C)

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We Hardly Got to Know Ya!

In the news, February 27, 1991, was a  
report that a "Scud" destroyed a building,  
killing close to thirty and wounding about a  
hundred in a Pennsylvania National Guard  
Water Purification Company. The outfit just  
arrived and had what we would have thought a  
"pretty good set up" in a good sized Kuwaiti  
city. R e a l l y ?

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It reminded your editor of a little  
soldier I met in an army corps hospital, both  
of us with minor wounds late in the "Bulge"  
fighting. He had a New York accent. He was  
still dizzy from the emptiness of his experi-  
ence, even though he blessed his good for-  
tune. In one sentence he ran through his  
training, replacement depot monotony, getting  
to an infantry squad on line after dark, have  
a Non-com explain the situation concerning  
his immediate comrades and told that in the  
morning he'd meet his platoon leader, and his  
"buddies".-- It never happened. He dug a fox-  
hole and when the enemy rounds came in he  
found himself with a ripped overcoat and a  
shrapnel-sore, stiff leg. The Non-com  
promptly checked his squad, sent the lad to  
the Medics and he was "out of it" before  
dawn. They say New Yorkers never are "shook  
up"! Too worldly, "streetwise"? R e a l l y !

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This happened in "C" Co. around Mortain.  
Let "Charlie" Bornstein tell it.

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"-- as far as names are concerned I'm only  
batting .500! I was in the T.D. of Sgt.  
Knowland (?). I think the driver was a  
Mexican-American. He drove and I drove. Then  
I was transferred to Heskitt's destroyer,  
because his assistant driver, a replacement  
became a casualty after being with us but  
three weeks. When we got to Mortain we were

short one man. All hell broke loose and we were ordered to leave the T.D. and dig foxholes. I was told to take the .50 cal. M.G. and set it up in security. Helwig gave me a hand. That afternoon a "6 x 6" came through and dropped off one man with his "A" and "B" bags. He was the replacement for our destroyer. Helwig and I were in the foxhole. I asked the replacement to squeeze in. He told me his name was Jerry. I'm sure of that. We were getting incoming mail and Jerry left the foxhole crawling under the front of our T.D.-- Maybe that foxhole was too small for the three of us, and I told him to get under the destroyer yelling for him to keep low! One round exploded near the front of the T.D. I saw that Jerry was not moving, and there was a very large hole on the top of his helmet. I knew he was dead. I pulled him out, put his raincoat over him near his "A" and "B" bags, and I took his rifle, put his bayonet on it, [?????], stuck it in the ground and put his helmet on top of it.--I will never forget it!"

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 In all three cases our people were out of it awesomely fast! But the national guard outfit is from towns on the Penn-Ohio state line and many neighbors were hit with the explosive end of that S C U D! REALLY ROUGH!  
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Womack Downey Heskett Ronco  
 Rogers (C) 3rd Platoon

WHAT IF ?--CLARENCE H. GANN (A)

Most of us can look back in our lives and grin inside as we recall the personal "What ifs--?" Looking back at the death of a very good soldier it might be worthwhile to wonder about some possibilities that might have been. Let's start right at the top!

In proposing plans for the action after our forces failed to close the Falaise Gap, Montgomery, the British commander, confidently thought the war would be over by Christmas if our immediate objective would be to invade Dutch ports for logistical reasons (transport of men and supplies) and cut east across the Rhine to take the industrial Ruhr. When Eisenhower let him try it on his own, the Germans fouled the British effort at Nijmegen and Arnhem in Holland.

After the Allies were across the Seine River, Montgomery insisted, that they make one, direct, "pencil-like thrust" above Aachen across the Rhine to the Ruhr and end the war close to the end of 1944.

What if Eisenhower had done what Montgomery had wanted the Allies to do? "Ike" is accused of playing it safe, fighting on a broad front basis with Ulysses Grant-like tactics from the Civil War,--commanding U.S. troops to cut through the Hürtgen Forest even when warned it was not worth the cost. He was confident that the Allies could get through the Siegfried Line before the dismayed Germans could repair and man it!

Our own Third Armored was proof that we were not in shape, without a respectable number of tanks, men or fuel, and the Germans used their imagination so to create a, "Miracle In The West" defense. Our battalion got up into the Stolberg Corridor and had to pull back when Hitler mounted the counterattack, "The Bulge"! Our commanders had thought we must go as far as we could before we stopped to regroup, get Shermans with 76 mm. guns, and T.D.'s with "90's". By that time we'd have taken French, Dutch and Belgian ports for logistical assurance.

But what if SHAEF (Ike) had accepted, totally, the Montgomery plan? Who knows? A loss for "A" Co. was one result. Here's what happened.

With Bradley playing "smart", Collins and our VII Corps cut north across the Canadian - Polish line of pursuit into Belgium and the

Allies enveloped a great bag of prisoners-- almost making up for the error of the Falaise Gap. Then the VII Corps with the First Army (Bradley) turned northeast, and the Third Armored headed for Mons far ahead of the pace expected of us by Collins. We coiled in defense at the Mons collieries.

Collins had used the telephone to reach every commander under him, but could not connect with ours.--His orders were to stop a few miles west of Mons because his corps had to preserve gasoline supplies.

"A" Co. watched in the darkness from its defense near the collieries. There was a miner's shower close by, and someone had gone down to clean up--came back. Sgt. Clarence H. Gann (A) folded his G.I. towel under his arm after he made sure his .45 in a new tan holster was in place, and he started down towards the shower. Along the way some teenagers, A.A. troops, probably trying to find a way to get out of the city, were in the high growths along the path. Maybe Gann saw the lads or one lost his nerve. His automatic sidearm killed Gann.---

What if Collins' call to Rose had gotten through?



Gann, Paulson, and your editor (A)  
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GOOD TEACHING IN THE 703rd

Len Straub (A), my communication sergeant, was very patient with me, teaching me how to get the job done as a rookie radio man on a C.W. (Morse Code) radio in a platoon leader's vehicle.

I don't recall when John Beacham reached "A" Co., but somewhere at Hood or The Mohave we had what I recall as instruction on an automatic sidearm. With a few words he made

me take down and reassemble that weapon as if the parts were telling my hands what to do. He never touched anything. I later learned that he had taught at a "private school". I was very impressed, and always remembered that the best teaching occurred when the student learned by using what he already knew. The teacher was to encourage and help the student solve the problem.

Before we reached the continent, Ed McIntyre gathered us for what he casually felt was worth very much to think about. From up above they were asking why losses in combat numbered higher amongst officers than non-coms. It did not result in much of an exchange and did get across what "Mac" wanted,--that there was no one answer--that enlisted men should be told what is involved in the missions and should keep in mind their responsibilities. Editor

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In line with comparing figures on casualties of officers and enlisted men note the following in U.S. Army history:

" Many officers did little to inspire respect. Some had a penchant for drinking and carousing--which of course set a fine example for their men. Such officers were in the minority, however, and over time a number of them were weeded out by resignation or by examining boards. The best officers from civilian life took seriously their new profession. Many of them burned the midnight oil studying manuals on drill and tactics. They avoided giving petty or unreasonable orders and compelled obedience to reasonable ones by dint of personality and intellect rather than by threats. They led by example, not prescript. And in combat they led from the front, not the rear. In both armies the proportion of officers killed in action was about 15% higher than the proportion of enlisted men killed. Generals suffered the highest combat casualties, their chances of being killed in battle were 50% greater than the privates." \*

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\* McPherson, James M., Battle Cry Of Freedom: The Civil War Era, New York: Oxford U. Press, 1988. 229-230. A magnificent book.

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"TAKE HIM ON THE SIDE-!!!"

On the swing southeast after cutting off the Cotentin Peninsula, a German tank got a bead on a Light Tank platoon that had pulled out of column to join our T.D.'s who were coiled and camouflaged. The light tank that pulled in last, took one round with casualties, then silence. Gann's TD (A) might have taken a chance and fired at relatively short range. Whispers etc. spread to remain silent. There were many minutes to pass before O'Connor sent home one round. The German tank had moved back and turned exposing her side to destruction.

Not long before the Falaise Gap. 1st Plat. "A" Co., set a one T.D. Road Block, gun aimed uphill left of the road. At about 100+ yds. the road turned sharply right. High ground was to the right of the line of fire thus no view up that turn. As the T.D. took position just off the column's line of march, about four "security" men from the 1st Plat. went forward about 40 yds. to the left, two in a deep barrow pit, two covering them from a wooded area. They had to wait but moments-- movement appeared ahead.

Ralph Steinhart signalled the warning. It was Schutt's T.D. that had it's sights at the edge of that turn up ahead, and did not wait for the German tank to turn out of the side road, the frontal side was the right target. One round of A.P. did it. Rifle and machine gun ammo scattered escaping enemy. Steinhart was hurt slightly. Editor

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### A Pant Wetter !

" When I was liberated from Stalag 6A, they flew us to France and we entered Camp Lucky Strike, where we were deloused and fed five times a day to help us gain weight and strength. Then they put us on the U.S.S. Washington, a former German luxury vessel, with former P.O.W.'s and combat-wounded to be shipped home.

Out to sea, on the very first day, they held a boat drill. I and three other former P.O.W.'s had been assigned to lift a fighter pilot through a bulkhead, onto the deck, and then into a lifeboat. That "flyboy" had really "cracked up".---Each of his legs was in a cast separated by a bar, and each arm, outspread, connected to a body cast!

Too late, the four of us learned that the bulkhead through which we had to get our spreadeagled patient and stretcher was too narrow. "No matter which way,"-- we were in trouble. We tried a few positions of possible exit, got rid of the stretcher, then used our eight, too-many, weakened hands carrying the pilot--no success, and quickly laughing very broadly, collapsing, holding our sides! The supervising nurse was helpless with her laughter. When the pilot shouted, "Let me go down with the ship, please?", she collapsed onto the steel floor, trying to hold on to her military composure without any success.

Charles Bornstein (C)

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### The Brooklyn Picketteers

For 48 hours the town of Blackstone, Virginia had no police department. Their two deputies and sheriff were in the local hospital. Some members of "C" Co. were quite concerned for their health!

One Saturday Richard Wiebolt and "Charlie" Bornstein had gone to Blackstone and a bar for refreshment. They were at the far end, with no more than a pair of other soldiers. A civilian approached Richard and mouthed a racial epithet, pouring a glass of beer onto Richard's shoulder. Well--Richard "got his Irish up" and started to throw punches. Someone hit "Charlie" who fought back, and at the same time he was hauling Wiebolt to get out of there. Actually both were tossed out!

They were accosted outside by a sheriff and his two deputies who had just driven up. They answered the usual questions with, "Camp Pickett", "Brooklyn, N.Y.". They were forced into the police vehicle in the face of drawn weapons. At the jail they were searched, money taken and confined in a large cell. The prisoners demanded a right to talk to the Provost Marshall and were told he would get there in the morning. That meant Wiebolt and Bornstein would not get back to camp as ordered,---- A.W.O.L.!

When the Provost Marshall got to them the lads learned they had been charged with rioting. They denied the charge, complaining that they had been jailed because they were from New York, and on top of that their money had been taken by the police. When the Provost Marshall asked if they could prove their accusation,---they could not!!



"C" Co. 3rd Plat. Heskett, Downey, Bornstein  
Rogers

When they did get back to camp, Captain Evan Regas had received a report on the incident. He hauled them in and ordered them to keep out of town.

One week later these "C" Co. stalwarts were in the P.X. "soaking up the briny" and talking about what had happened, when three other soldiers who had overheard enough of the talking, approached them. They said that the same treatment had been given them by the Blackstone constabulary! By then they were pretty well "oiled up" and fuming. Into town they went, --no passes of course--military tactics discussed all the way! They took jumpoff positions along the side of the theater-- one of them called the sheriff telling him there was a scrap on at the theater-- and waited for the gendarmes. They dismounted and moved to the alley where the offensive began. Sticks were the weapons used to "beat up" on the cops, their guns taken and their carcasses cast into the rain barrels at hand!

The men were back in camp before bed check. After roll call in the morning, Captain Regas sent for Richard and "Charlie", sat them down, and said he wanted not a "squeak". The State Police had taken over Blackstone. "I want both of you out of this camp by tonight since you are getting an emergency furlough."

It was midmonth and "Charlie" was broke.

"I can't get home--!" Capt. Regas hand came out of his pocket with a "ten spot" for him!

"The sheriff and his men will be here in the morning to find the men that roughed them up and took their cash. The battalion is moving to Indiantown Gap in PA and you'll report there!"

"Charlie" said he paid back Capt. Regas!

Editor

WHA' HAPPENED, "C" Co.?

Below is the information gleaned from what our battalion reported in its Summaries of Operation for July and August, 1944 till the 3rd Armored Div. crossed the Seine River. The editor selected "C" Co., adding what one of its men wrote the Road Block as to his experiences. Does what is related below help you recall what you saw, did? Please let the Road Block know about it?

As you read, notice how what that comrade of yours contributed, brought people and events alive so that we begin to have a more faithful, personal narrative of what happened over there.

"C" Co. had its first WIA on 7/26/44 in Normandy when one of its men suffered a shrapnel wound in his shoulder.

On the 31st of July "C" Co. claimed to have knocked out 2 MK V tanks, 1 probable, 1 75mm towed gun, and took 2 prisoners. After dark they took a bombing attack by the Luftwaffe with no casualties or damage.

August 1, 1944. The company suffered heavy artillery fire all day. The first platoon claimed they knocked off 1 Mk V tank and 1 towed "88". The third platoon also ruined 1 Mk V, with a heavy truck thrown in.

"Early on in Normandy we were hugging a hedge row, all twelve T.D.'s. about ten yards apart. It was my turn on guard with a borrowed tommy-gun. Norman townspeople greeted us and brought wine. The T.D. gun was at ready. My T.D. and post were at the entrance of the field. I noticed a man with a

twig from a tree in his hand and at the same time Lt. Austin came in with his jeep and parked near my T.D. Just then the man with the twig in his hand came over to the T.D. on my left. At the muzzle of the gun he measured it with this twig--that's the way it looked to me. I stood up straight as he passed me and yelled "halt!" He started to run. I didn't want to fire till he was clear of the other people. When he got to the entrance, I fanned the trigger, two or three rounds were fired and the man dropped. I didn't want to leave my post, but Austin ran, first, toward the man, then back to me wondering why I had fired. One of the medics came over to me five minutes later and said, "You just shot a German soldier! --We just took his pants down to see the wound and we found that he had on a German uniform underneath!"

Capt. Evan Regas, the C.O., was wounded on the 4th of August near La Bourigny and evacuated. The 1st platoon destroyed 2 PZKW V's and 1 PZKW IV. One Enlisted Man was wounded.

"There was plenty of mail that day. We had stopped and had our 'hoods' up, 1st echelon stuff. "Regas" was 20 feet or so in front of a tank when a round came in and he was hurt. At first we could not get our driver to drive over him so we could protect him from the shelling. That driver was wounded not much later and I never learned how. My memory tells me that then, I thought it was self inflicted.

[ By the way I called Capt. Regas the other day. I jogged his memory a bit, and he saw things the way I had. He's in good shape, laughing, said he gets the newsletter, sends his best to everyone!"]

August 6, 1944. 3rd Platoon hit 1 SP 88mm.gun.

August 7, 1944. Enemy attack repulsed. REFFUVILLE. Maj Gravely, Div ATO had visited the Bn CP to report the German thrust West. The 3rd Armored joined with 30th Inf. Div. to cut the drive off successfully.

August 10, 1944. 3rd Platoon K.O.'d a towed "88". 1st Platoon took heavy artillery and mortar fire, losing 2 EM KIA, 2 EM Severely wounded in action, and 1 lightly. The 3rd Platoon lost 1 EM KIA, 1 EM LWA.

"At some spot during this early period we had stopped. Soon a big Frenchman ran up

to us yelling and pointing to a wooded area, 'Boche, Boche!' I was cleaning my Springfield, '06, had the bolt out and neglected to take it with me when I headed where the gentleman had pointed. Sure enough there were seven officers, no less, and I took their sidearms including a fancy, kind of pearl handled pistol. After I turned the officers over to someone to take 'em to M.P.'s, my platoon leader wanted that pistol. When I refused he insisted that confiscated weapons had to be turned in. I refused, was threatened with a court martial and got something like one. Colonel Showalter told that platoon leader that if he wanted a dressy sidearm he had to get it from a captive, himself!" Bornstein (C)

August 17, 1944. "C" Co. was not far from RANES. They destroyed 1 "88" SP, 1 Mk V, lost 1 Officer KIA, 1 EM SWA.

August 26, 1944. The 3rd Armored Division crossed the Seine River.

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#### MONTGOMERY'S SUSPENDERS ! The British "Stiff Upper Lip" !

On New Years day, 1945, an estimated 600 planes of the Luftwaffe hit British airdromes at Eindhoven and Brussels with special force and wrecked 180 or more parked planes, including both Montgomery's and de Guingand's (Montgomery's Chief of Staff) personal transports. When it was reported that "--they caught the British with their pants down," the First U.S. Army heard that G-2 of Montgomery's staff sent G-2 of the Royal Air Force a pair of gentleman's suspenders!

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#### THE BRITISH IN NORMANDY

"The impressions left in the minds of many American commanders was that the British sometimes tended to be far too conservative.--The British tended to retain unsatisfactory commanders too long before relieving them, while the exact opposite occurred in the US Army, where senior commanders were frequently relieved for the slightest transgressions often without adequate time to grow into a job. (d'Este from Gen'l. Gavin). --- The British had no Pattons and too few senior commanders like Harding and Templar who breathed fire down the necks of laggards."

"Our tanks (British) are badly led and fought. Only our superior numbers and our magnificent artillery support keeps them in the field at all. They violate most of the elementary principles of war. They bunch up- they are the reverse of aggressive- they are not possessed of the will to attack the enemy... My opinion is that a great deal of their failure is due to the retention of the absurd regimental system."

What the critic means is that the British Regiment clung to tradition, units manned and developed as of past glories, not what was going on in combat.

d'Este, Carlo, Decision In Normandy, N.Y.:  
E.P. Dutton, 1983. 288-9, 295  
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