



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



Vol. IV #2 703rd Tank Destroyer Battalion Association Newsletter June, 1993

## TO THE SELECT COMMITTEE, AND YOU!

Have you the addressed the envelopes to newspapers you are to make ready for the letters Fred will give you to stuff and mail when we gather in Indianapolis? If you'll not be there, please let Fred Hunt know and he'll send you those letters.

The next Road Block will get to you too close to the date of the reunion in Indianapolis, (9/1-5/93), thus this notice is important in asking you to do your share in our effort to round up the members of the 703rd we have not had with us for so very long. We hope it will add to the number of men and women we'll see the following spring in Springfield for our reunion.

We have lined up our C.P. and rooms at the Springfield Sheraton,-- the show bus as well. There'll be many shows from which we can choose,--performers such as Andy Williams, Wayne Newton, and Tony Orlando. When it opens, Bobby Vinton's new theater will feature the Glen Miller band.

Sure hope all our folks are ever better in health, and realize how well they will enjoy the resort comforts of spring in the Ozarks.

Fred Hunt (Hq)

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## GET UP AND LET'S GO!

We want to see you in Indianapolis, 9/1-5/93. Join the 3rd Armored Div, Association, and reserve your room at the hotel. For more information drop a line or call the association at P.O. Box 61463, Phoenix, AZ, 85082, (602) 840 039 0398.

## HAVE YOU REJOINED THE 703RD?

I.B. will see that you'll be carrying some buckshot in back of your wallet if you don't come through with the "sawbuck" for membership, and hope you'll volunteer another one for the Road Block.

I.B. Wagonseller 320 W. Walnut, Bowie, TX 76230

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## LOUISIANA: One Road March

Camp Polk - February 26, 1942

Hikes conditioned us. No argument! Breaks along the way gave us time to look at the natural life around the camp, as well as get acquainted with its ticks and mosquitoes.

I never forgot one long road march that was given variety by becoming a walking race a couple of miles before getting back to camp. Of great surprise and joy, the winner was one of the "little fellers", Ray Descoteaux (A). He was one of the recruits who joined our outfit at Camp Polk.

Then there was the burly, courageous "little feller" who was permitted to not take the long hikes, but insisted on going. I can't recall him not having to have the medics bring him back to camp after suffering exhaustion. That was Bert Wooten (A).

Let my diary show you the road march as I saw it.

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In the morning we hiked on a back, dirt road, and on the way a gas mask drill added to the sweat on our faces. Only three miles out and in, it became a race to get back to our bunks to escape the sun. A few days earlier a longer, much more sweaty march included passing by a camp for deranged women. I never learned whether being taken there was intentional. The fence between their grasping hands and we soldiers, seemed to be a live lesson in the dangers of social diseases.

The marches those mornings told me more of the beauty of this part of Louisiana. The only thing to spoil it was the misfortune of people in poverty near the hovels they call home, cheap, unpainted board, some tar paper to keep the wet out. Those folk should come to our mess hall, and take the abundant food left over. On K.P. earlier, I was the only man who seemed to appreciate the squash cooked with brown sugar. Gallons were left untouched. One good meal and these civilians would feel indebted to us for a month.

Normandy

Northern France

The Rhineland

The Ardennes

Central Europe



There was a little boy, barefooted,  
standing at attention when we passed. The  
background of firs, strong and straight, had  
been infused in this little fellow's back-  
bone.

It's summertime making me wish dearly  
that I could crawl down the fuzzy ground  
cover atop bankings lining a creek about a  
mile from camp, and sit looking at the slow  
moving water over pebbles in the shade of  
overhanging trees. I can appreciate why the  
Spaniards and the French loved Louisiana even  
though we had to view it through the bleary  
eyes of G.I. road marches.

Nate Goldberg (A)

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### T A P S

Ben Kottowicz checked out after a long  
siege of illness, May 6, 1993. Sure hope his  
Headquarter Company friends dropped him a  
line during his most trying period. He lived  
at 10101 Belmont in Franklin, IL 60131.

Len Straub (A)

### Task Force Lovelady

Col. William B. Lovelady, who kept  
telling us how much the 703rd meant to him  
since we shared plenty of action together,  
was taken from us Mid-March this year. Dee,  
his dear wife, is at 250 Mounts Bay Ct.,  
Longwood, FL 32779.

Ed McIntyre (A)      Len Straub (A)

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### THE DESERT

While a soldier in World War II  
I first saw the desert view  
Miles and miles of rolling sand  
Cactus and flowers all over the land.  
Mountains near and far  
Dried lakes shone like a star.  
Gorgeous sunsets  
Beautiful sunrises  
Red, yellow, blue  
Some with a purple hue.  
Jackrabbits so thin  
Cougars on the rim.  
Such memories of a bygone year  
Yet ones I hold so dear!

Don McKiernan (A)

### The Roadblock To End All Roadblocks

As we rumbled down the road to Vaux,  
With three destroyers operational,  
We set up a roadblock at a crossroads,  
A choice not operational.

Attached was a unit of engineers  
As our outposts for the night.  
So we mined the roads and placed our tanks.  
We thought we did it right.

We had two functional destroyers  
But the third one's turret had been hit.  
The gun shield welded to the turret  
Couldn't elevate or depress a bit.

To get the gun level to the ground  
We had to cut down a tree  
Then roll the tanks tracks upon it,  
'Til the gun was level, you see.

The engineers were mining the roads,  
While we pulled a log in place.  
A Boche halftrack pulled up--turned 'round  
And back down the road did race.

Our gunner couldn't elevate, of course,  
So he climbed up to the machine gun.  
He managed to get a few rounds off,  
And then the halftrack was gone.

The engineers climbed into their halftrack  
And started to chase them down the road.  
They hadn't travelled very far,  
When we heard a mine explode.

The Boche had driven through the mine field  
twice.

They did it coming and going.  
Naught happened to them, but our brave  
engineers

Had sent that mine field blowing.

"Hap" Paulson (C)

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### YOU ARE HELPING WRITE HISTORY!

#### MORTAIN

[See R.B. IV, 1, March, 1993]  
Letter to I.B. Wagon seller 2-8-1993

Thank you for your kind letter, and for  
sharing the excerpts from your wartime diary  
with me. I have noticed while shifting  
through all of the official records for the  
period that "C" Co. was in the thick of the  
fighting at Mortain. 1C and 2C fought around  
LE MESNIL ADELEE and LE MESNIL TOVE. 3C was  
with Task Force 3 commanded by Lt. Col.



703rd Road Block-3-

Hogan. That platoon was surrounded for two days along with the rest of TF 3 of the 33rd Armored Regt. I got a call from a Mr. Charles Bornstein who was in 3C. He told me that they were ordered out of their M-10's by the platoon leader and to dig in among the hedgerows. I supposed that this was because the shelling was so heavy that the crews could have suffered severe casualties staying in the open-topped TD's. Mr. Bornstein said that they dug in the .50 caliber MG's off the TD's and waited for an attack that never came. During this period they watched the Germans pull 88 mm. guns up to the top of a hill about a mile away and shell TF 3. 3C was credited with knocking out one of the guns. They were also reported to have lost a TD while on Hill 278. The two medium tank companies up there (H and G Co.'s 33rd Armored Regt.) lost fourteen M-4's. During this same period the Germans shelled TF 1 and TF 2 of CCB quite heavily. Col. Cornogg, CO of the 36th Armored Infantry was killed during the afternoon of 8/9/44 in a small shack NE of the town of JUVIGNY. You mentioned a soldier named, Ross. Do you remember if he was with 3C? I had also read that several enemy tanks were knocked out by "C" Co, near LE MESNIL TOVE (I have the grid coordinates and will check the maps)- then as I read through your diary excepts I saw that Sgt. Bush and Wray were in a TD that had been hit three times, but they kept engaging the German tanks in that area (the Germans were from the 2nd Panzer Div. - I think the 1st Bn., 24th Panzer Regiment - I am getting a document about that unit translated). If there is anyone who might know in some detail what happened, I would like to be able to write about them.

I noted that you mentioned in your diary the bombing of LA BAZOGE. This area was hit several times by enemy aircraft during the Mortain counteroffensive, and I did find mention of several casualties suffered by the 83rd Reconnaissance Bn. during these raids.

I intend to write Mr. Sam Backus (C). Thanks so much for his address. I would also like to thank you again for your unselfish assistance. I have found that the official records are very sparse and do not talk about a lot of what happened. I also think the history books do not give credit to the 3rd Armored for their part in stopping the German attack at Mortain. It will take me a while to write this book, but with people like yourself helping me, I know I can accomplish this

task I've set out for myself. Once again, thank you very much.

Respectfully,  
Mark J. Reardon, Major, U.S. Army  
(67th Armor)

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Does the letter above and the item on Major Reardon's work to write a book on the Battle of Mortain, 8/6-12/44, in the last R.B. help you recall your experiences there? Contact him at 2802 S. Columbus St. A-2, Arlington, VA 22206-5000 or call collect: (703) 325-4077 (Work), (703) 671-0194 (Home)  
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A CASUALTY IN HARRY'S CREW!

Lt. Harry E. Hendrickson (C) of Brazil, Indiana received news of the birth of his 6 lb. girl baby. All of us had been sweating out this baby for him. There was the usual line of kidding.

We were in the orderly room when the news came in a letter. Capt. Gosch told 1st Sgt. Galante to post a large notice on the outside bulletin board with the news that the Lieutenant's baby was born, and to post on the board inside that the baby was a girl.

Lt. Hendrickson left the room to eat lunch. At the kitchen he opened a second letter from home. He told Burr, the cook, to get me. He certainly looked glum as he spoke,

"Tell the 1st Sgt. not to post too large a notice about my baby. I've just received another letter saying that she has passed away."

I.B. Wagon seller (C) 11/14/44  
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FIND A STRAY AND YOU'LL HAVE TWO!

Fred Hunt has been on the prowl for "strays", 703rd men with whom we've lost contact. He wrote a letter that was published in a national veteran's magazine. One of the "strays" who turned up was JOE CONVERSE (Hq,A), P.O. Box 1960, Williamstown, VT 05679, (802) 433-5329. When he wrote Fred, he noted that he knew of an "old friend" and "potential member", PROSPER GANIER, (Hq) 922 Elysian Fields Rd., New Orleans, LA 70117-8548. Those of you who knew "Joe" and "Prosper",-- get in touch with them. We are sending them Road Blocks. Encourage them to join us and come to our reunions.



Fred will have a similar batch of letters for a committee to stuff and mail to newspapers all over the U.S.A. when we get together in Indianapolis.

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### HEAR THIS!

To All The Fellows Of The Old 703rd!  
I looked at the reunion notices in the V.F.W. Magazine for a number of years for something on the 703rd, finally found it and called Fred Hunt.

Is there any history of the 703rd to be had? I sure would want "a lot of it".

Haven't heard a thing from anyone in all these years except EUGENE BROWN in Eugene, Oregon, and haven't been in contact with him for a long time. I was transferred to another outfit at war's end, and was home by 10/15/45. It certainly was not very fast. It took two weeks after we got to Norfolk, Virginia to get my discharge at Ft. Lewis in Washington.

I will try to contact some of the old outfit. I was part of the cadre in the tents at Camp Polk.

IRVIN M. and MILDRED BURRIS (Hq) 22253  
So. Dan's Avenue, Beaver Creek, OR 97004

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### WOES FOR OUR CHAPLAIN

Our good chaplain, Leonard Marchewka (C), had to turn down a Search Committee assignment on our hunt for "strays", because he has had angina problems, add "a couple of colonoscopies" [fortunately no cancer], a left eye cataract removal, and some technical medical advice, "we found too much old age garbage that remains a threat to that eye"! He can't drive any more, thus he cannot get to the library to get the addresses of media needed for the "stray" hunt letters.

We sure hope there's progress so that he can get to our reunion though he doubts that.

Let's get some good words to a good bloke!

511 Page Ave., Lyndhurst NJ 07071

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### About Time We Learned About Scruggs!

"--I am a very busy man being a Service Officer at the V.A. Hospital here, and I also have a P.O.W. club [made out of] my original

outfit that was captured in the Philippines and on the "Death March".

I have good feelings for the 703rd. I was with them for over two years, and I hope you have a fine attendance at your reunion. Also, I would like to see the fellows give some acknowledgment to Col. Yeomans, the officer that got them into condition to be survivors."

George F. Scruggs (Hq.) 5324 E. First St.  
Apt. 281 Tucson, AZ 85710.

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### Fred To Marjorie To Fred

Fred Hunt, Marjorie and Fred Krupnow (Hq) got together via phone and letter recently. Krupnow's got that male affliction and Hunt has tried to boost that team's health so we can have them at our reunions. He recalled Krupnow as a "congenial non-com", a change from those with whom he had to deal with while in basic training at Camp Callan near La Jolla, California.

Let's all of us get to Krupnow to encourage him to whip that prostate problem. 7201 Merriman, Romulus, MI 48174 313 721 1532  
Marjorie is very concerned about Fred's health.

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### WE FOUND HIM!

Frank Leroy Walker (A) Rte. 2 Box 776, Sweeny, TX 77480 reported in to Fred Hunt. He will be coming to the reunion, May, 1984. He says he was in a tank crew as a replacement late in the action. He sure would like to know the fellows who remember him. Drop him a line. Join him in The Ozarks in the spring of '84.

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### A FEW DAYS BEFORE MORTAIN Through Different Eyes DIARIES

The Third Armored Division moved into the breakthrough early on July 27th. "A" Co., of the 703rd with Task Force "X" (CCA) under Brewster of the 32nd Armored Regt., moved south to Canisy. Hickey, in command of CCA, was to stay out of the hedgerows, drive past opposition leaving pockets of resistance for the infantry, swing west through Cerisy La Salle, and pin fleeing German units to be



ast from the Coutances area. But the anti-tank fire from a railroad t, poor roads to circumvent it, 's three task forces stymied. Cerisy had to be taken to keep high ground ans who could then hold the Third rom pinning back the escape route. d Hickey drove to Montpichon, one e to take high ground outside Cerisy a third task force to head for

28th was filled with disappoint- gains. German forces, though hit by f our tactical fighter bombers, con- set effective defenses. Outside of A moved into action. Barbalinardo's s destroyers took a long time in out a towed .88 that the Germans selves, its mover, and a personnel Later the whole platoon was

Gann and Barbalinardo's crews had German counterattack when light the 36th Armored Infantry pulled German antitank shell had sailed high ey's destroyer. The platoon held the e to nightfall. Then, outside Cerisy using a Red Cross guise, the onned Henderson, 1A's platoon who held fire. From their position ns attacked, forced the destroyers hedges from where their .50 cal. guns were not that effective, and security was sure they were in for the attack halted, and in the waning P-47's strafed the hedges 50 yards eatedly. Our light tanks counterat- Infantry came alongside the rs, and a withdrawal of 150 yards a better defense due to night blind-

er cover of darkness the Germans at. After noon of the 29th the task oved out preceded by a fine curtain lery fire. The platoon moved through rted town as Feeney blew up an d German tank. The column hit the gas r a good distance westward with ease ttfall. This may have been the time ed forward at night. The security men on the deck of the destroyers look- trouble from the trees and hedges, constantly feared "crazy" Heinie who ise hell with a Panzerfaust (bazooka) grenades. Great! He had skipped with s. Or would the Germans try split the by striking against us?

Later the platoon griped. Though Bar- balinardo and Gann's crews had been recom- mended for Bronze Stars for holding the fort at Cerisy La Salle, [Canisy ?] the complaint was that twice, division infantry had pulled out on them. Any time trouble loomed we were called up front and the "doughfeet" were heard to say, "Those T.D.'s saved our butts!"

Credit Capt. Cole (A). He had called for direct bombing and strafing just in front of the first platoon hedge rows. That really helped make the difference.

During July 29, "A" Co. was credited with messing up a Mk. V, Two .88's, one of their movers, and helping stop an enemy infantry counterattack. But the Germans had fought well, and the goal of Bradley to trap large numbers of the enemy had not been attained.

On July 30, 1944 we learned we had been beaten to Coutances. After a night's rest and a turn south, we found ourselves in an enlarged column approaching Gavray with Avranches the goal. Speaking to civilians, Trombley, gunner in Schutt's TD, was told a company of Germans had crossed the river at Gavray. During the night the 36th got across and with a few losses took the other side. We crossed the engineer bridge, and rested during the day on high ground. With speed to the southeast and in column, we caught up with the enemy. The French handed us a POW near Brecey. East of the town, P-47's had blown a bridge, and we had wait till it was fordable. When we halted we were right in town. POW's had to be checked out. We were at an inter- section, held up in column, packed too closely,-- security a must! Toma and Schutt were on the ground with us to make sure the buildings were not cover for closeup attack against the destroyers. Civilians pointed, "Allemandes"! Feeney swung his destroyer about. We searched windows, building tops. Boswell and Steinhart poured fire into a van coming at them, yet it got away. An infantry halftrack cut loose towards it with a .50 cal MG. Zip gun rounds fell short of Feeney who responded with a 3" rd. down the street.

I had kept to the .30 cal. MG on the sandbags on Schutt's TD. He came back up the side, and I gave him a belt of ammo and dis- mounted. Boswell, Schutt and I slid in and out of doorways in the direction of Feeney's fire. Three enemy had backed out of a garage in a small vehicle to escape the town. The 3" Rd. gutted one man a bit, killing another.



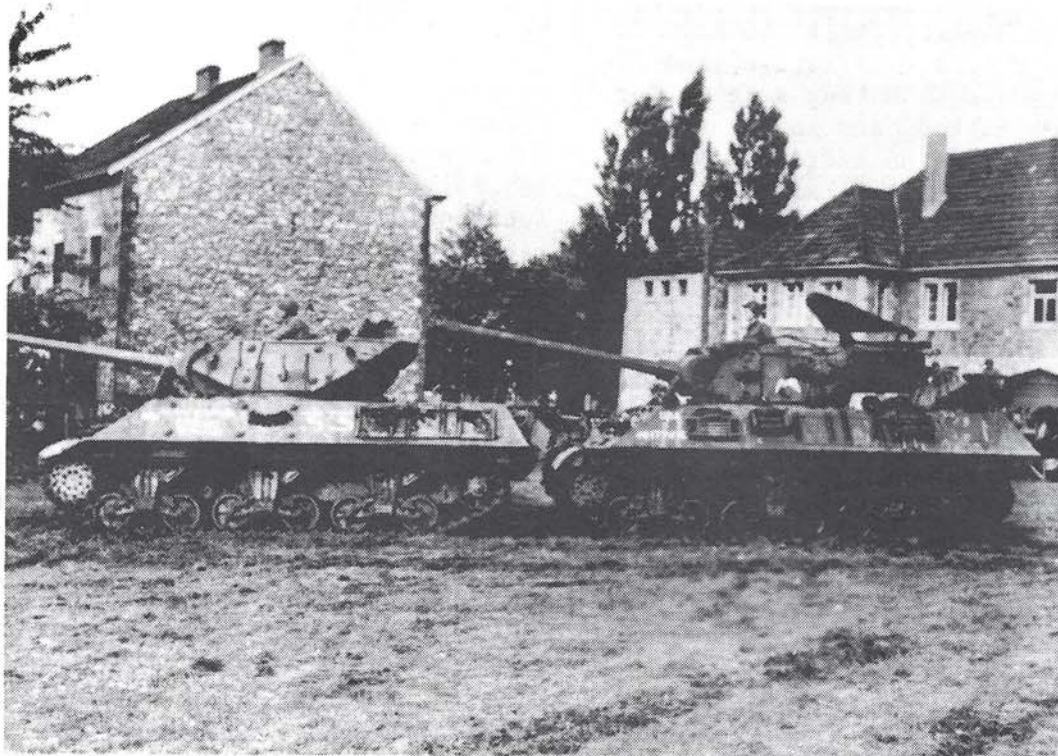
703rd Road Block-6-

Up Front by Bill Mauldin



"Now that you mention it, Joe, it does sound like the patter of rain on a tin roof."

"Able Fox Five to Able Fox. I got a target but ya gotta be patient."



An M-10 and an M-36 of the 703rd Tank Destroyer Bn. at Breinig, Germany.  
Gift of Günter van der Weiden



703rd Road Block-7-

LOADING LIST FOR PLATOON SECURITY CORPORAL'S 1/4 TON  
Personnel (w/full field equipment)

1 Cpl Sect Ldr Ass't (C)  
 1 Svt Driver (C)  
 1 Pvt MG (C)

EQUIPMENT:

1 Barrel Spare .30 Cal MG	On hood
1 Machine Gun cal. .30 M1919A4	On Mt M48
1 Tripod Cal. .30	On hood
6 Box Ammo cal. .30	3 Between front seats
	2 Behind radio 1 on gun
1 Net Camouflage 22x22	On hood
1 Net Camouflage 15x15	On hood
2 Drum Gasoline 5 gallon	In bracket on left rear
1 Top Canvas	Right of rear seat
1 Box Radio Spare Parts	Behind rear seat
1 Flag Set	Glove Compartment
1 Kit Spare Parts Cal. .30	"
1 Can oil for lubtivating MG	Right chain comp.
5 Grenades hand frag.	"
1 Rod cal. cleaning .30	Rear of driver's seat
2 Batteries Spare for radio	Under right front seat
1 Battery Pack for radio	in left chain compartment
1 Kit first aid 12 unit	Left chain compartment
1 Outfit cooking small	Under rear seat
1 Scabbard Carbine Leather f/driver outside left on dash	Under rear seat
1 Tool Kit Vehic w/flex. nozzle	On floor <del>XXXX</del> right of rear seat
1 Apparatus decontaminating 1 1/2 qt;	Under rear seat
1 Can water 5 gal.	
1 Bucket canvas fldg.	

ORGANIZATIONAL EQUIPMENT CARRIED ON INDIVIDUALS

2 Respirators Dust M2  
 1 Compass Watch  
 1 Compass Lensatic  
 1 Goggles w/clear lens  
 2 Goggles w/green lens  
 1 Template Map M1  
 1 Binoculars M3 with case and strap  
 1 Watch wrist seven jewel  
 1 cutter wire M1938 w/carrier  
 1 Pick Mattock inrenching w/carrier

INDIVIDUAL EQUIPMENT LOADED ON VEHICLE

3 Blanket Rolls	1 right front fender 1 front bumper 1 on hood
3 Bags Barracks	1 on top rear seat on left side
	2 left front fender
1 Towing Rope	On Bumper
3 Bags Field	Strapped to rear of body on top bows
1 pr. Mittens Asbestos	Under right seat
2 Flashlights	In glove compartments
Pioneer Tools in brackets	

I.B.'s (C) Check List For His Cadillac !



Guts, flesh all over. We picked up the automatic sidearms, pistols, one a long-barrelled Luger. The wounded man wanted water, help. We told him a Medic would soon be there. As we turned to come back Trombley fired a round into a personnel carrier coming into his line of fire,-- set it ablaze. I felt foolish, my hands full of weapons and not able to use my own what with Krauts in town. One bicyclist, got close enough to hit as he turned and ran successfully from us.

As we moved out, we were ordered to destroy enemy vehicles we passed because they might be used against the rear of our column.

We set up as close as we could to the stream. Men dismounted and threw loose concrete from the ruined bridge as directed by an engineer officer, as tanks started to cross. However the enemy in Brecey still wanted to spit fire, and split the column. A gun was wrecking halftracks and M-20's in town. It was close to dark when we returned to Brecey's edge. A Colonel told us to throw four rounds into town, and we slowly backed off. A grenade was lobbed off a banking at Feeney's TD,--missing. Security works at night and I clambered up the banking against repetition. Try playing "cops n'robbers for real" in pitch black darkness so Heinie wont drop a grenade on your mates!

At around midnight we moved slowly to the river, crossed and found that the forward elements had left us. No infantry was with us. We tried to catch up later learning we had left behind part of the column. We were sent to high ground to set up for indirect fire waiting for the rest of column. We had skipped a horse-drawn Kraut outfit before crossing the bridge, and here on the hill near Refueville we felt we missed an easy ambush. The sound of tanks sent us scurrying into position, but they were going the other way. Mines were laid but nil occurred.

Editor

Our forces had broken through west of St. Lo late in July and tried to surround the stubborn rear guard of the Germans. The battalion suffered casualties at Cerisy La Salle and other Norman battle sites with whatever task force tank destroyer sections were assigned. "B" Co. had remained in reserve on the 27th and later moved with a task force closer to the developing action. "C" Co. had

passed through Cerisy La Salle, their Reconnaissance Sergeant, "I.B.", probably knew of the action that had occurred there. Nevertheless he was drawn to write of his attraction for the beautiful village on a hill with roads leading to Coutances, Marigny, and St. Lo. On the way to Montpichon he gave K rations and candy to children.

On the following day, 8/1/44, Third Armored columns were on the move with fighting leaving its mark. By the end of the day, the 48 hour casualty list of our battalion recorded 1 KIA, 9 WIA, 1 Ofcr WIA, 1 M-10 out of action due to an enemy mine, 1 M-10 hit by AP, damage not serious, 1 M-10 out of action, mech. failure. The battalion was hurting enemy forces with more effectiveness than the enemy hurt us. We were taking 30 POW's. It had been a field day for tanks. Infantry with tanks had cut through into German rear areas. The Germans fought hard and well.

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".

Close to midnight battalion headquarters radioed to "C" Co. asking whether they were going to fire indirect, and if they needed more ammunition. The third platoon had fired 62 rounds, results unknown. The destroyer crews had wondered if they would ever use their artillery training, a better chore than road blocks, indeed!

Enroute to a new objective, "C" Co. Forward C.P. stopped at La Bloutienne. The Reconnaissance Sergeant was impressed with the aura of its cathedral and beautiful, old graveyard. While awaiting movement of the column, the enemy shelled the town. The hardy Texan did not have time to enjoy the town's charm, because those incoming rounds had killed eight men close by. The bivouac that night was two miles south of town. Enemy positions were so well defended that our forces had to withdraw. Our 36th Infantry took heavy losses. On Lieutenant Marchewka's destroyer Corporal Rand was killed, Private Richards seriously wounded dying soon afterwards.

On the next day "C" Co. had to move back through La Bloutienne. The French populace were frantic with fear that the Boche would be coming again. The Texan obtained water for his vehicle from the home of an elderly lady



and her clubfooted daughter. During the night the C.P. moved to its new position near Coulounray-Boisbenatre encircling Villedieu enroute. There was word that Sergeant Burgess, a fellow Texan, in the first platoon had been killed by shrapnel.

It was on the fourth of August when "C" Co. reached Le Mesnil Tove. Capt. Regas was hit in the leg by shrapnel while we were up with 1C. There had been plenty of "mail" that day. The platoon had stopped and had their "hoods up". The Captain was twenty feet or so in front of a destroyer when a round came in and he was hurt. Shouts to the destroyer driver to move his vehicle to protect the C.O.'s prostrate figure from the shelling, seemed to take minutes.

Sgt. James R. Bush of Corsicana, TX, TD Commander later received the Silver Star for his part in this engagement. Capt. Regas gave his pistol to his Reconnaissance Sergeant to keep till his return, but Shields, the Supply Sergeant, told him that he could be court martialed as of regulations, so the Texan gave it to him. In a few days Capt. Regas returned for a visit and his pistol.

Within two days the C.P. moved past a long line of French civilians evacuating St. Pois further south. Their essential belongings were carried in carts, in buggies, on donkeys,-- one "Old Grandma" of eighty or more riding a donkey. Here was a mother pushing her baby in a carriage, all folk hobbling whenever they walk because of their wooden shoes. Tanks on the same roads forced the populace into the ditches.

By the sixth, CCA had swung south with "A" Co. on the right of the division columns to Ambrieres Le Grand on the Mayenne R. Battle Groups had gone up to Barenton and ahead of Le Mesnil Tove and Mortain. One group had linked up with the Second Armored Division, and would be with them for about a week.

Gen'l Hickey (CCA) said they would not stop till Hitler said "Enough!" We hoped Hickey was right. He was not. Plans were changed, but it was Hitler who now went on the attack westward near Mortain, in one of the great tank battles in history, and some of our platoons were involved. I.B. Wagoneller

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#### REFLECTIONS IN THE WALLOWAS

I started teaching in grade school in

Southern Idaho. Next summer I trained as a boy scout counsellor on the coast of Oregon, then assigned to a scout camp in Chief Joseph country near the west wall of Devil's Canyon. Through that gorge the Snake passes to join the Columbia River in Washington. The Wallowa Mountains are beautiful and unique, unlike the rest of the Pacific Northwest. They had remained above the flooding of the prehistoric past. Little did I imagine that I would have a chance to very deeply enjoy its wonders. Occasionally, as I prepared to sleep under a mountain sky, events of the day reminded me of my experiences in the 703rd.

Two of my chores at camp were to teach basic knots, and riflery on a ".22 range". The Boy Scouts cut off a half inch of the butt end of a pole, inked it, "Trapper", and pinned it on my shirt. "Trapper"! Yeah! To be truthful, I liked the idea.

The rules on the rifle range were the same as at Camp Polk. Range safety demanded no "ifs, ands, or buts"!

All went well for the first few groups that fired. The emotional drive to hit a target would make one lad forget the rules. He turned off the firing line and the mouth of the barrel was staring at my chest. I did the right thing, having him miss three turns. He was "hungry" by the time I motioned him "up there"!

How could I fail to reflect on the first time we were on the range at Camp Polk with the targets at 200 yards. In the prone position there was the Springfield's recoil, my blink, and word that if that had been a man, half the right side of his neck would have been pierced! Lying there I had said to myself, "You can kill someone with this gadget!" The 703rd had properly prepared me. I had helped the Boy Scout.

Then there was that late Saturday at camp, more food for dinner than ever. Other counselors were smirking a bit as they offered me some of my favorite canned peaches. Soon the program director let me have it! The guide who was to take Explorers up into the Wallows for a week, could not make it. All the other counselors had excuses. "Trapper" was the right man.

"Stick to the trail on the map. The ranger huts have medical supplies." The Explorers were fine lads to be sure, handling weather and the trail well. They fished, took photos and rarely needed to be reminded of "trail discipline".



Spectacular were the scenes; the glacial potholes that were small lakes with little drainage, refreshed by higher snows; the unusual plants, yet my worries could only be calmed when everyone was "in the sack"! I had to see to it that those lads got back to camp in good shape!

On the last day as we gradually moved downward along the slopes to where we would be picked up and returned to camp, a rainstorm was little help in easing my anxiety. Our shelter halves worked well. The sun quickly dried the trail, and only the halt of the lead Explorer brought me up front. Utter dismay!

The next 75 yards of the trail was covered with what looked to me like a fresh rock slide. Three or four times on the trail we thought we had heard the roar of a rock slide. Blame the rain! We had to get across. Those sharp rocks extended down and up slope from where we were to cross, too far to get around the slide. We stopped and thought it over. They'd be waiting to pick us up.

We waited for at least twenty minutes till we saw coming toward us on the trail two pack animals and four horses with two guides. They did not stop at the "slide". The horses walked across those rocks as if born to it. As they passed close by we learned that the guides were bringing up two elderly women to camp further in the mountains. Being old was no hindrance in the way of life of western women, and those horses had crossed many of those "rock slides"! I felt a bit foolish for my fears as we hiked the mile or so to the waiting trucks.

Later I wrote about that hike in the Wallawas, about those fears, and always I remembered bringing that mail to the first platoon of my company across that open, flat field in Belgium. Jerry dropped single mortar rounds near me. The little message of those rounds was different than the sound of those rocks on the mountain slope. As I hit the dirt, the concussion and the dirty snow dropping on me, I wondered what would happen if I got up again, -- to run, no! That wisp of a sound of the second round was not that close, but dirt did hit my helmet! My platoon got its mail.

Both those incidents held anxious moments upon which to reflect and be grateful.

Nathan Goldberg (A)

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THOUGHTS FROM BREINIG  
Excerpts of Biography  
8/2-17/44

Big Wray of Big Spring is dead, His large  
Western heart no more  
To thrill to a coyote's wail,  
Or the hum of a cowboy song.

Old ladies in black of Le Mesnil Tove  
Walk among the tall birches,  
Wreath American graves with roses,  
Then hurry home to cider  
And tales of a battle that is over.

Big Wray of Big Spring is dead, The man with  
the big heart.  
The best soldier in the T.D.'s,  
Dead by the roadside.

Death came to Sgt. Burgess-  
Burgess of Marshall, Texas-  
Well-liked, curly headed, handsome,-  
Enemy tank fire, small arms,  
Barrages of artillery.  
Chaos - with a reply.

While other men lay deep in foxholes  
Big Wray of Big Spring  
And Cpl. Bush of Corsicana  
Manned their gun,  
Destroyed three Panther tanks,  
Kept firing after their own destroyer  
Had been hit three times.

While Mothers read of Patton's glory-  
Big Wray fought on - till death.  
We rushed on, still are rushing'  
But we're not forgetting Burgess, Richards,  
Rand,  
Big Wray, Ross, Voghel, Mims Johnson,  
And others we left by the roadside.

Men - who missed the swift kiss  
From a Belgian Miss,  
The friendship of a beautiful people.

Someday when wars are done, Mrs. Wray,  
When I have a home by the sea, or somewhere,  
I'll tell the full story of your son, Big  
Wray  
Who died in Normandy  
Fighting with the 703.

I. B. Wagon seller

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DETAILS

Camp Polk - March 8, 1942

I was on special detail again. Today, as it turned out, I almost enjoyed it. I was awakened by Corporal Wade, a short, blond, Florida lad. After a hearty breakfast, Nate Falk, a chunky fellow from New Britain, Connecticut, and I chopped wood, and filled the orderly room woodbox. It was raw and cold making the axe a pleasant instrument of warmth through the vigor of its use. We then scrubbed the latrine, raked the inside and outside, cleaning it till it was "good enough to eat in"! Pouring oil on the excretions prevented the odor from coming up and suffocating latrine users.

After a fine chicken dinner we dug a hole in the soft clay, 4'x4'x3' to be used as a trash pit. Superintending us was Wade, clothed in an overcoat, chilled as he failed to enjoy our comforting exercise. That was the first time ever that I knew of two Jews digging a hole for a Swede!

After this we chopped more wood for the orderly room. As we were finishing I asked the Supply Sergeant for an electric bulb for our tent. He said he had one. I quickly scooted down to our tent to exchange the bulbs. When I returned to the orderly room, Wade jawed me to a fair weather for leaving my post. We had been working W.P.A. style all morning and afternoon. I took five minutes to help myself and my four tentmates, then get a jabbering! There are, truly, two ways around here, the right way and the army's way!

One disappointment that hurt was my inability to attend a dance at Jasper, Texas, Saturday evening, 60 miles away, because I was on that detail. The men did not come back till 3:00 AM, and they had a good time. Sweet girls made the evening most pleasant. What gripped the lads was that they were allowed to dance with one girl for but half a set before they had to change partners mid-floor. They just would not permit the girls to become "chummy". That's the army for you!

Nate Goldberg (A)

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THE WALL OF LIBERTY

The Wall of Liberty is a new monument listing the names of Americans who served their country's armed forces in the European Theater during World War II. It will be built

in Caen, France adjacent to the U.S. Armed Forces Memorial Garden and Memorial Museum.

To have your name engraved on the wall or the name of a veteran you wish to honor, call 1-800-WW2-VETS. Your \$40.00 for each engraving will be used to build the Wall. You will receive a handsome Certificate of Registration inscribed with the name of the veteran you are honoring.

On June 6, 1994 it will be the Fiftieth Anniversary since the attack into Normandy. The U.S. Congress in 1990 began the action which asked The Battle of Normandy Foundation to coordinate a private sector initiative to honor the American veterans of the European Theater of Operations on that day.

Call as noted above or write for a registration form to the foundation at  
1730 Rhode Island Ave., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

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RETIRED

I lay on the bottom of my cage  
Thinking of all the different seasons  
I have flown free and happy as a bird.  
Now as time has passed us by, and I feel  
My wings are old and tired, I feel that  
Time has come upon me and my future is  
dim. So are my eyes that are as old as  
My wings.

I feel that I am now safe from fear.

Charles Bornstein (C)

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A RESEARCH PROJECT  
Were You In Könnern?

Erhard Saecker, a historian, fled from the Russian occupation of his home village, Könnern, Germany, at war's end. He is writing a retrospective of what took place in April, 1945 involving his community. He interpreted for our forces at that time and appreciated how his people were treated by our troops. His research told him that "C" Co. of the 703rd was in the area, as were other units of the 3rd Armored Division. Is there anyone in our association who might have personal recollections, photos or advice they will share? If you do please inform:

Robert W. Buddenbohn

2603 Evergreen Ave.

Baltimore, MD 21214-1732

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703rd Road Block-12-

Mustard and Lewisite Gas Testing Of  
Soldiers in W. W. II

"The Dept. of Veterans Affairs has announced that it is expanding its list of recognized long-term effects of significant exposure to mustard gas. The decision means an estimated 4000 veterans of W.W. II exposed to high concentrations of mustard gas during chamber and field tests may be eligible for VA disability compensation for associated health problems. If you were exposed to goodly amounts of mustard gas, contact the VA office nearest you or call 1 (800) 827 1000.

Our association has a member who had field tests during basic training at Fort Knox. He was sent a copy of that study. Early chapters are quite good reading.

Rall, David P., Pechura, Constance M.,  
Veterans At Risk: The Health Effects of  
Mustard Gas and Lewisite, Washington, D.C.:  
Institute of Medicine-National Academy Press,  
1993.

703rd Tank Destroyer Bn.  
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Date of Issue  
Vol. IV #2, June, 1993



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