



703rd Road Block



Colonel W.E. Showalter (Ret.)
Honorary President

Vol. V, #4 703rd Tank Destroyer Battalion Association Newsletter 12/1994

GREETINGS FROM PRESIDENT (?) FRANK AND MARGE

I have, to date, received 25 answers to our question. If there is any confusion, I will straighten it out right now. Simply put: DO YOU WANT TO HAVE A 703RD FAMILY REUNION IN 1996 BY OURSELVES?

THIS IS THE LAST OPPORTUNITY TO TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT. NO HEARSAY VOTES - WE COUNT THE ONES I RECEIVE AT P.O. BOX 131, HURLEY, N.Y. 12443, OR BY TELEPHONE, 1-914-338-5818. RIGHT NOW THERE ARE 17 FOR OUR OWN REUNION, 5 FOR [our battalion association to have its reunion at] the 3RD A.D. MEETING. SHOULD THIS DECISION BE MADE BY MERELY 18% OF THE ASSOCIATION? UNLESS YOU ANSWER, IT WILL BE!

There is a rumor that a business meeting was held in Phoenix. Of course that would have been impossible. There must be a majority of the Executive Board present to have one. I understand that there was a discussion period, and I was glad to hear that. Discussion is necessary, and communication a must to keep us alive.

There are some problems in setting up reunions. [Keep these in mind.]

1. A large group is necessary. We think in terms of 50 or more men, plus the ladies. No one will talk to us about small groups, as they will not tie up facilities for such. They make their living on volume, not sympathy.
2. The cost of lodging must be as reasonable as possible. We have few millionaires in our association.
3. The place must be accessible by air, train, bus and decent roads for those who drive there.
4. Decent restaurants within easy reach.
5. Shopping nearby for those who will.
6. A room large enough for "hospitality" for all, and any meeting we have.
7. Probably, interesting places to see for those who must, without a lot of hiking. Our day for that has passed.
8. Probably near a golf course, too.

After New Years we will have a Board Meeting in New Jersey and will make a final decision on trying to set up a 703rd Reunion. This does not preclude someone else from planning meetings with the 3rd Armored at Valley Forge or any other place. Most of the board members do not wish to do it. We only speak for the 703rd Association.

Looking forward to seeing you all again.

Happy Holidays from Marge and Frank

**** Normandy **** Northern France **** Rhineland **** Ardennes **** Central Europe ****

T A P S

Emmett H. Caress (2A)

This soft-spoken Kansan came back to the battalion as a shavetail during the late action in the Bulge. He was taken from us on October 20, 1994. Emmett and Daisy courageously attended our recent reunions, Emmett hardly indicating, with his quiet smile, the harshness of his suffering. The strength of his leadership was ever evident to his comrades whether in battle or as a friend.

1326 Appleton
Parsons, KS 67357

Frank J. Gautreaux (2A)

Jack Moriarty (2A) used to run into Frank in a subway station in Boston a decade ago when they were both working. Frank worked for the U. S. Postal Service. He was in Bob Harriot's crew whose T.D. was knocked out in Normandy. [R.B., II, 2, 6/91, 4-5].

Jack thought Frank was in "good shape" after "all he had gone through" in battle. Frank died at home from a coronary heart affliction leaving a brother, five sisters, five sons, three daughters and seven grandchildren.

Frank was a classic example of a draftee who marched with both big toes heading for home. They were his compass points.

**BRIDGE OF REMAGEN
REUNION COMMITTEE**

On March 7, 1995, the 50th anniversary of the capture of The Bridge at Remagen, Germany will be celebrated. The allied armed force units in Europe at the time of the crossing will join with the people of Remagen.

Details to help you be there are available during the day at (304) 744 1348, at night (304) 755 5006. Elvin F. Martin, Chairman

OUR DIVISION REUNION

October 14, 1994, Phoenix, Arizona

As ever, seeing our "Third Armored" friends Russ Steele, John Goodin, Leroy Hannemann, Henri Rogister--surely missing Haynes Dugan, again the joyful greetings of

Irving and Regina Lee who we helped liberate at Nordhausen, plus sharing with our own battalion comrades, looking for the men and women who couldn't make it, hoping they were well,-- all of it was a feast of sentiment and remembrance.

The memorial service was ever more emotional. Many more were the canes, the walkers, the wheel chairs, the bent backs, but the spirit was never so strong!

Thirty nine plaques, including one in Stolberg, honors the Third Armored Division where we were in combat in Europe. Six are being placed where we trained in the U.S.A. The men who brought them to Europe were treated most generously by officials and folks where we lost blood so many years ago.

Close to 600 men and many loved ones were in Phoenix. The numbers who come are lower. There are 2363 members of the association. They have a balance in their treasury of \$22000. Annual dues for 1995 will be \$15 and even then they will have an annual deficit of around \$9000.

A member who spoke to the gathering has authored a book soon to go to press that details some of the reasons why we had inferior tanks, why the division lost so much of our armor.

The sightseeing tours took groups to see Sedona filled with so much of the beauty of Arizona. It was being with comrades, that made it a such a magnificent reunion.

We shall meet in Valley Forge, PA, 9/13-16/95, and Fort Worth, TX, in 1996.

**703rd Tank Destroyer Battalion Association
Annual Membership for 1995**

Please send \$20 for membership and the quarterly newsletter to:

Florence C. Goldberg, 86 New England Ave. #50
Summit, NJ 07901

TREASURER'S REPORT 11-16-1994

Paid for Road Block, 9/1994	\$ 304.05
Balance on account, 11/16/1994	3200.76
Paid membership for 1994	98
" " " 1995	23
" " " 1996	1

Florence C. Goldberg (A)

**703RD TANK DESTROYER BN. ASSOCIATION
BUSINESS MEETING AND LUNCHEON**

Present

Everett Stites (Rcn) Jim Roberts (B)
Merle Goodrich (Hq) Claude Ball (B)
Don McKiernan (A) Leonard Straub (A)
Fred Hunt (Hq) Steve Popovitch (C)
I.B. Wagon seller (B,C) Jim Santino (A)
Nate Goldberg (A)
Ed Hoy (Rcn,Hq) Rufino Hualde (Rcn)
Leon Michaud (Rcn)

The principal business of the meeting was the request from our Chairman, Frank Miller, concerning the future of the 703rd T.D. Bn. Assoc. Frank firmly asks that his questions in the Sept., 1994, Road Block, be answered by you, and sent him as soon as possible.

He wants the corrected name, address, and telephone number of every man of the 703rd who is getting the Road Block or nonpayers may no longer get it. We shall continue to send copies to the relatives of the deceased and friends of our battalion association. The men at the meeting supported that policy. Concern will be shown for those members in need. Listing the nonpayers in the newsletter was favored by some, or an alternative such as inserting a notice to each nonpayer in the next newsletter. There are no longer separate, voluntary payments for the newsletter. It comes with membership. The dues are \$20.

Approval was given to back up an appeal that our association continue in action, that it meet annually during and at the division reunions. They would instruct the elected officers to learn as quickly as possible the schedule of the division reunion for its four day gathering. Then our association could make the flexible arrangements for our separate business and social gathering(s).

Those enthusiasms expressed the feelings of fourteen members present at the reunion. There are many more members and they should give Frank their input.

Regional reunions of our association are to be encouraged and organized by members in that area. For an example there's:

The Military Museum of Southern New England
125 Park Street, Danbury CT 06810

There are excellent lodging and dining places for a regional reunion and visit to the museum which has "the broad purpose--the consideration for a neglected piece of military history, the Tank Destroyers of World War II." What say, Yankees and East New Yorkers,--get to work and plan it? N.G.

ON TAPE IN PHOENIX

Leon A. Michaud (Rcn) has offered to help build our association treasury. Buy his book and he will pass on the money. He is a fine yarn spinner as he conceives of the adventures of a man who served Jesus on the way to Calvary. Leon uses his experience in the army, as a chiropodist, the language of Arizona, and love of loyalty to encourage the blessings he has found in his faith. It is fine reading.

Michaud, Leon, D.C., Simon Was Black, N.Y.: Vantage Press, 1992, 211 pp. \$15.00

Dr. Leon and Fay Michaud,
1848 E. Coronado Rd.
Phoenix, AZ 85006 602 252 3664

Two folks who are very devoted to the division organization, are Mary Corrigan and Leroy Hannemann. Mary who shared in founding it, is in the hospital. Leroy, in a wheel chair, was on the job at the head table as our Secretary-Treasurer and Editor of the newsletter.

Chaplain Kenny Lynch, ever inspiring, spoke of the Third Armored's flag at the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., a symbol of our sharing with others the liberation of its prisoners. A picture of our division flag with that of others was in the Road Block, IV,4, 12/93, 7.

Illnesses, and other problems of family concern kept "Hap" Paulson (A,C) from coming. He made it to Florida. Check on him, gentlemen!
124 36 Ave. N. St. Petersburg, FL 33704

Claude Ball (B), when with Task Force Lovelady, was ordered into position to protect a forward CP. The experience before the enemy, and the decisions he had to make,--- when he thought about it later,-- made him realize that Jerry had had plenty of chances to destroy his T.D. crews and himself. It happened 3/45, probably near Düren.

Ed Hoy (Rcn,Hq) reports that John Erwin (Hq) is hospitalized again, in rough shape.

Get him your best wishes!

John T. and Laura Erwin,
7458 White Ash Drive
South Haven, MS 38671 601 393 8965

That Ed Hoy-Erwin yarn in the R.B. on their assigned search for the division water depot, occurred 8/16/44, after crossing the Seine R. near Corbaye or Tilly.

Len Straub (A) told me he felt that with all the training preparing him to see that "A" Co. communication was effective,--there was so little action that called on his skills.

We recalled the CW (Morse Code) problems we had in column at Polk. I reminded him of how his C.O. called for air support just after the breakthrough, and with Gann and Bar-bilinaro won medals helping break up a "Jerry" delaying action before Mortain. Len must have felt good then!

Leon Michaud (Rcn) and Rufino Hualde (Rcn) are old friends. Rufino is a grateful patient of Leon, the chiropracter.

Don McKiernan (3A) says that one of the crews in 3A captured the German crew of a STUKA that had to land near their position. Don, to this day, is certain that his platoon mates performance in combat and behavior, deserve much more recognition than has been given them. There were some "bad apples", but relatively very few in our whole battalion.

Don can tell yarns, but they are full of fun, about men who were a bit relieved from the tension by what was pleasing along the road of march, the calvados, pretty girls, a comrade out of sight and returning to tell of adventures with "the folks". Don covered up for those whom he could depend on in combat.

HARD TO BELIEVE!

"Co. "A", Camp Polk, Louisiana
February 28, 1942

Some of us did not have to drill, or do calisthenics last week. We were rehearsing for a show! However, having missed the sex hygiene training films, we had to see them, today! The other film explained the Articles of War. Time for "Athletics" were allowed us because, we had performed our duties well. Our C.O. said the alternative would have been a 20 mile hike,--malarkey! Ordinarily, Saturday afternoon was ours. We ran relay races, and I did some "calisthenics" in my tent! At the shower room wash basins, I scrubbed clean my union suits and a couple of towels. After refreshing myself in the cool spray, I went to supper, cafeteria-style at 4:30 P.M.

Sgt. Rugarolli, a swell guy, sneered at my complaints that we lacked equipment, "Let them take all the time they want, because the longer it takes for us to be organized, the longer it means we stay away from the fighting and its consequences!"

I sure miss everyone at home! I miss the piano a lot because there isn't one in the whole battalion area. It really hurts!

March 1, 1942

It rained, heavily and lightly, all day, but continually discomfoting. The first Sunday off and it had to rain! The chicken dinner we had, helped, though!-- plenty of Louisiana cherries for dessert to top it off.

Cpl. Krieger's girlfriend here isn't his wife. During the week he had shown us a picture of his wife and child. He has never seen the baby. His wife has been working at some distance causing a separation of 7 months. He does not care what she does as long as she does not outdo him. The little squirt is a lousy man, but a good soldier. His Port Arthur girlfriend is not bad. She drove a '42 Chevrolet, and she brought along a friend "for the ----!" Krieger is very informative!

Howie O'Connor had a birthday today, and at night we had a little celebration, cookies and ice cream.

March 3, 1942

Calisthenics, drill and plenty of it, too! I can hear, "By the Right Flank--By The Left Flank--Left Oblique" and that hated, "To The Rear, March!" We were given Garand rifles, and we handled them the rest of the day. The Manual of Arms, as well as the Positions of Firing were taught us rapidly. We were told we'd fire them the next day. At night we saw training films on machine guns. The equipment was ancient and the tactics, "1918".

LONG LIVE THE QUEEN VI

On March, 1, 1944 the battalion learned that Major General C. H. Corlett, with leadership experience in the fighting on the Marshall Islands, was leading the XIXth Corps, Major General L.H. Watson, the 3rd Armored Division. Major W.E. Showalter commanded the 703rd with Goodrich, Beacham, Self, S.S. Smith, Dearden and Hart at battalion headquarters. Cole, Siebert, Regas, and Murray had the line companies.

Training appeared to come closer to the real thing, but with little concentration. Road marches could be overnight, 25 miles in 36 hours, as part of combined arms exercises. The men hid in groves during the day.

Yet there were furloughs. "Hap" Paulson went to Q.M. Transport School in Plymouth to learn how to sustain troops on landing craft if they had to remain on board for a few days. It was clear that the overall organization of armored divisions was shifting, because our division combat commands were regularly noted as "changing according to the situation". The new armored divisions that developed after the "Third", were "stream lined" with less manpower but more adaptable for the combined armor-infantry attack and plans for subsequent breakthrough and exploitation.

Early in April a combined arms exercise was designed to include testing the mettle of the battalion. On the attack CCX (Combat Command "X") was made up of the whole of the

703rd, two battalions of the 36th Armored Infantry Regiment, and a company of the 23rd Armored Engineers to get the combat command across a river. CCX proceeded to the right of CCA. Each T.D. line company acted as a unit, infantry sections combined with T.D.'s. The infantry moved out at 5:00 A.M., T.D.'s later, at times filtering through the infantry, occasionally dealing with special problems such as winching infantry vehicles over slopes which slowed the advance. The first objective was to look over the River Wyle before Sherrington. "A" Co. fired indirectly to assist the infantry holding a bridgehead. Counter battery was assumed to have killed Major Showalter and Capt. Beacham at Bn. Hq. Plans were changed so that on a night march the battalion would cross the bridge put in by engineers. On a combat team, they moved quickly, as a "whip", to gain the objective. The exercise gave our officers field practice in leadership of the battalion in combat. On the continent the battalion was never to operate as a unit in combat, nor did the line companies or the platoons. T.D. sections of platoons were joined to small task forces, the T.D.'s, primarily, on road blocks. Combat often defined the manner in which T.F. commanders used the T.D.

Martin Feeney (A) who, always, had little to say, added a rumor when he claimed exhaust extensions for T.D. waterproofing were in the motor pool at White Sheet Castle Camp. We were back in camp and had a better look at our new battalion C.O. as he complimented the men for their work, backed by reports from safety officers on the ranges. There had been a raft of brigadier generals observing. One said he was willing to be bracketed by the indirect fire of the 703rd. As Major Showalter spoke, the contrasting styles of the gruff Lt. Col. Yeomans and soft tone of the new C.O. were impressive. We were to have kept the nine day exercise secret. The Watsons in Mere knew when we were to leave on our exercise and when we would return.

ON THE ROSTER IN PHOENIX



Ed and Maja Hoy (Rcn-Hq)



Leon Michaud (Rcn) Rufino Hualde (Rcn)



Merle and Dee Goodrich (Hq)



Steve Popovitch (C)



Everett Stites (Rcn)



Len Straub (A) Jim Roberts (B) Claude Ball (B)



Georgia and Fred Hunt (Hq)



I.B. and Inez Wagonseller
Shirley Flaker ((B,C)



Florence Goldberg Yolana McKiernan
Jim Santino (A) Len Straub (A) Nate Goldberg (A)
Don McKiernan (A)

LOOKING BACK



"A" Co. At Ease, Camp Polk



Your Editor, Camp Polk



Osborn, Thornhill, Thomas, Michalowski, Reiling
Rutter, Olson, Armore, Van Fossen, Creviston, Gann
"A" Co. Camp Pickett, Va.



Conditioning Course at Pickett



Emmett Caress (A)



Frank and Leslie Woolner (A), Frank Miller (A)

A FRIEND WE MADE

Even as he has grieved the loss of his wife, Haynes W. Dugan (Div. Hq.), Historian, took time to send us a check and a memo filled with action. He's up for "minor surgery" and could not make it to Phoenix

10/6/94

Here is a footnote to your "Taking a Lacing While Freezing!" Road Block, 9/1994, 9.

As to the fighting at Cherain in the Bulge, Bill Lovelady told me of one of our Sherman tanks going around the corner of a house and getting off 3 shots at the front of a Panther tank, all of which bounced off. Our turrets worked better than that of the Germans, but they had more punch in their guns. At that point our tank backed up around the corner of the house, and the Panther got off 1 shot which went through the house and knocked out our Sherman.

On 9/23/94 I gave a talk at the E. Texas Historical Assn. at Nacogoches, Texas (very old town by Texas standards), and some fellow at the back seemed pretty knowledgeable about The Spearhead Division. It was I.B. Wagon seller (B,C)!

[Haynes must have been responding to "I.B."s remarks when he wrote the following.] I still think word was getting to the 703rd "pretty slowly" about the gas attack in Normandy being a false alarm. [Your editor recalls sweating it out inside his gas mask.]

Are copies of your newsletter going to our archives? If not I will send mine. Let me know.
Haynes W. Dugan

[They sure are! If you have anything that you believe might help future scholars or is worthy of being part of museum exhibitions dealing with our battalion or division, check with:

Prof. Maynard L. Brichford
University of Illinois
1408 W. Gregory Drive
Urbana, IL 61801 Editor]

HIP! HIP! RECON!

After the breakthrough at St. Lo the various Recon. Co. platoons were attached to line companies all the way. Their assignments were directly related to the movement, communication, and security of the T.D. missions. Since the destroyer platoons were generally assigned to task forces, often split even further, "Recon" men might become a close part of T.D. crews and their security.

When CCA and CCB were in column, they drove ahead as part of "The Spearhead" doing what we associate with "Recon". They patrolled the roads, and kept supply lines open. Occasionally they transported ammunition, even were used in the indirect firing of the T.D.'s. Their M-8 Armored Cars were used on road blocks.

WHAT DO YOU RECALL, RECON?

Dear Fred, [Hunt (Hq)] 10-13-94

We were given your name by the American Legion as we were trying to get information from the 703rd T.D. Bn. -----My brother, James A. Murray, was killed in action on April 17, 1945, and we would like to have more information as to where his outfit was, etc. -----Thank you for your time, and hope to hear from **YOU!**

Sincerely yours,
Thelma M. Derr
221 Chestnut St.
Montoursville, PA 17754
717 368 1191

April 17, 1945

From the Battalion Summary of Operations

The division had crossed the Weser R. beyond Paderborn. 2B under Jim Roberts had with them, 1 Rcn, under Everett Stites in Task Force Lovelady on April 16, 1945. They were in RAGUHN. At 0400 the next morning they were attacked futilely by uniformed youths madly acting as infantry, who had infiltrated into the town. Their desperate advance was met by the 90's on the TD's, and TD security with Rcn. They were frustrated with 30 prisoners taken. However Jim Murray, Stites' radio man, was hit by a rifle bullet causing immense hemorrhaging, a mortal wound. 2 men were WIA, and 2B suffered 1 LIA.

During the rest of the day a section of 2B warned its other section of enemy tanks near BOBBAU-STEINFURTH. In order to see the enemy Sgt. Manry had his TD moved and it was

destroyed by 4 direct hits. Demarco (B) was killed, Creenan (B) and Preddie (B) wounded and evacuated. The other TD of the section wheeled into defilade and safety. Later in the afternoon 2B was ordered to withdraw from the town to the vicinity of SALZFUETH. During that withdrawal they were attacked on their flank by enemy armor. They did destroy 1 SP, but had to take an alternate position due to the heavy fire they were taking. They then knocked out another SP gun. 1 Rcn. lost an M-8 armored car to enemy fire with 2 men wounded. The enemy covered up, but our air force put them out of action.

At some time that day Jim Roberts' peep driver, Tom Collins (B), was hit on the shoulder and evacuated. Both were happy to get together again at our Springfield, Mo. reunion last Spring.

Mrs. Derr and her husband, Bob, were very pleased when Everett Stites called after he and Jim Roberts received a copy of the letter your editor sent to Mrs. Derr, which included the core of the Summary of Operations above. Fred had sent her letter to Frank Miller and your editor.

Everett spoke at length to them. He sent along Road Block copies, and we shall put the couple on our mailing list.

OUR LEADERSHIP [See R.B. V,1, 3/94, 9-10]

H.Q. 703rd T.D. Bn. 1/18/1945

TANK DESTROYER OPERATIONS II

The Bulge, 12/18/1944

The 1st U.S. Infantry Division, in addition to its own 57 mm guns, had its normal Tank Destroyer Battalion, the 634th (Self Propelled 3") attached and integrated, Tank Destroyer platoons to Infantry Battalions. The mission of the 703rd T.D. Bn. was, cooperating under Bn. control, to initiate immediate reconnaissance of routes and gun position areas on the division left flank, and be prepared to repel any armored thrusts that might get through friendly troops on our left. This mission was given because our left flank was not yet fully stabilized, and up to that time, enemy pressure was strongest from that direction.

Reconnaissance Co. was given the mission of reconnoitering for routes and position areas along the road from Weywertz to Kaltenherzerberger, and late in the afternoon returned, taking an officer from each T.D. Co. to the positions netted by the search to familiarize themselves in case of future operations in that area.

In the meantime, shortly after noon, a task force was hastily organized from whatever units were available at the moment, to proceed to Weismes to protect the evacuation of a field hospital located there. 2A joined this task force and moved out at 1400 hours. The task force under the command of Lt. Col Davidson of the 634th T.D. Bn. consisted of Bn. HQ, Rcn. Co., plus 1 T.D. section of the 634th T.D. Bn., several light tanks and 6 assault guns of the 745th Tank Bn., B Co. minus a platoon from the 1st Eng. Bn. and our 2A.

It was found at Weismes that the hospital had already been evacuated, and the Task Force remained in that area to secure the town. It appeared that they arrived at a most opportune time, for the following morning, 12/19, 2 German tanks approached the town from the East, and two from the West to find what defenses, if any, we had there. 1 tank coming from the East, succeeded in entering the lower part of the town, but was driven out shortly thereafter. At 1715 hours, several tanks, with an estimated company of infantry, tried to approach the town from the South West from the vicinity of Chivre Mont, but with no success.

2A, in road block positions, facing South and South West fired 3 rds. at a tank in the morning attack, but saw no action in the afternoon attack. The tank at which they fired withdrew, apparently undamaged.

During the 24 hrs. from 12/18-19, the 16th Inf. Regt. had completed preparations to move out, the situation on the left flank had become more stabilized, and at 1000 hrs. the Div. C.O. issued orders for the 26th Inf. Regt. to hold their present positions, expand

their right flank to the railroad running between Weismes and Bütgenbach, and the 16th Inf. Regt. to attack and secure the high ground along the highway between Weismes and the railroad. The 703rd T.D. Bn. was relieved of its original mission and ordered to provide protection of the division zone from the South, coordinating with C.O.'s of the 16th and 26th Inf. Regt.s. In other words, this battalion was responsible for preventing any armored breakthroughs in the entire division zone, deepening and strengthening the weak spots, and maintaining a mobile reserve ready to move to any threatening sector.

The Battalion Commander, after contacting the Regimental Commanders, ordered Co. "A" (minus 2A) to assemble in the vicinity of Weywertz in direct support of the 16th Inf. Regt., and Co. "C" to assemble at Bütgenbach in direct support of the 26 Inf. Regt. 2A remained at Weismes, and "B" Co. remained in reserve at their original assembly area. At 1500 hours "C" Co. moved out, while "A" Co. moved the following morning.

The attack of the 16th Inf. Regt. proved to be merely a movement into new positions, as no resistance was encountered, and by nightfall they were well dug in. The 26th Inf. Regt., had further consolidated their defenses southeast of Bütgenbach, and occupied the high ground between the railroad and their original positions.

During the day, on top of the two small attacks on Weismes, three probing attacks took place along the division front. At 0315 hours, two tanks with infantry attacked the 26th infantry positions from the south. At 1045 hours several tanks with an estimated company of infantry attacked from the same direction in conjunction with an attack with similar strength from the east (Bullingen). At 1950 hours several tanks with a company of infantry attacked north from Faymonville against the 16th Inf., which by that time was sitting on its objective. All attacks were successfully repulsed.

*****TO BE CONTINUED*****

AS IF WE DID'NT KNOW!

Below are quotations from a book review:

A. Horne with D. Montgomery, Monty: The Lonely Leader, 1944-1945, N.Y.: Harper Collins Publishers, 1994.

The review is by Russell F. Weigley who wrote what many feel is the best book on W.W. II.,

Eisenhower's Lieutenants.

"To the British, long accustomed to the European military scene, the generals who arrived from the New World might as well have come from a new planet.--On the other hand the Americans might have been more charitable toward the war-weariness and fundamental military weakness of the British."

"Despite prewar reforms the British Army was a painfully faulty instrument and the U.S. Army in Europe was not without limitations; yet in Normandy Montgomery led these forces to victory in a knock-down, drag-out slugging match against one of the most formidable war machines of all time."

"Concerning the flaws, the authors are correctly scathing--for example, in their condemnation of British Gov't. and industry for failing to provide tanks worthy of appearing on the same battlefield with those of the Germans. American tanks, they emphasize, came off little better than the British."

"--some of the blame for the deficiencies of British armor [rests with] Montgomery himself; notwithstanding his concern for combined-arms warfare, he never paid sufficient attention to tank quality. Just as damaging to British military effectiveness was the absence of armored personnel carriers to transport the infantry."

"A yet more serious flaw was insufficient manpower. With the British, the shortage could not be helped, their population base was too small, and Montgomery's acute awareness of that fact goes far toward explaining his fabled caution. With the Americans, the shortage of men and divisions in N.W. Europe might have been prevented by a better allocation of resources. But as it was, not until almost the end did the allies possess the 3-to-2 numerical superiority that attackers

CHRISTMAS FURLOUGH

It was early December '41,
Tennessee maneuvers were over and done,
Our one-year of service soon would be up,
So we went to the PX to raise a cup.
Christmas was coming, our furloughs, too,
Our world seemed rosy, the sky pure blue.
But while we laughed, and drank our beer,
Word came of Pearl Harbor, the world turned
quite drear.

The panic set in. Screwball orders came down
To protect all the bridges for miles around.
Twelve inch culvert pipes rated a tank,
We all pulled guard duty regardless of rank.
Miles around in Georgia, by order of staff,
We posted guards from a "Deuce and a Half".
Two men to a tank, four hours on, eight off.
We'd repel those invaders, dear friends. Do
not scoff.

Though ready to serve country and Lord,
We had nothing to fight with-no ammo aboard.

This lasted for weeks, until finally, one
day,
Some sensible soul took that duty away.

Christmas had passed, and furloughs came
through.
The number excused were exceedingly few.
I know not how they chose us, just who stayed
or went,
But my Christmas furlough came during lent.
When I got home, what a sight did I see,
For there in the parlor stood a huge
Christmas tree.
It was dry, parched, not a pine needle on it.
But there were ornaments and lights and an
angel upon it.
My Mom looked at me and said,
It's brittle and sere,
But it would be there for you,
If it stayed up all year."

"Hap" Paulson (C)

should have over defenders and American divi-
sions were always too few to permit rotating
them properly out of the lines for rest and
refitting.-----We Americans too often ignore
it in favor of praising the supposed marvels
of our economic mobilization."

WELCOME MAIL

Sutlief Hickman (B), Ralph Newberg (B) and
John Balmes (A) came through with responses
to the questions Frank Miller and your Execu-
tive Committee asked in the September, 1994,
Road Block.

Tom and Helen Laughing (B) joined us in
Reading, but couldn't make the long trip to
Phoenix. Editor

VISITORS WITH FRANK AND MARGE

"Bob and Lora Schutt (A) came here
December, 2, and helped us celebrate our 49th
wedding anniversary. We were glad to see
them, and wish they could have stayed a few

more days. They also dropped off a half dozen
1.75 L.jugs of 'warwhoop' juice which belongs
to the association. If we do not have a
Family 703rd Reunion, I'll have to drink it
all myself. Tha would, naturally, be a real
hardship!"

Bob Downey (C) also visited. Glad to see
him. That man is a tornado of activity and
ability!"

MEMORIAL PRAYER

Chaplain Timothy H. Irons
703rd Tank Destroyer Battalion
May 30, 1945

Oh God! our Father, our ever present help
in time of need, our strength in time of
weakness, our refuge in trouble, and our com-
fort in time of mourning.

We are met here this day in memory of our
comrades who have given their lives in this
war, and to honor them for their part in the

preservation of our freedom, for the safety of our country and loved ones, and for the cause of human liberty.

We pray that all mankind may learn from the great and tragic cost of this war that only by our combined and sincere efforts, and in a spirit of brotherhood, may we guarantee a lasting peace. Grant us, Oh God, the guidance and accompaniment of Thy Spirit in this worthy work. We ask now that thou wilt take unto thyself those who have fallen. May they enter into thy rest.

Finally, Oh Lord, give unto us faith in Thee through the way of this troublous life. Guide us through the good and evil; be unto us a shining light and a glorious pillar, and when at last we have finished our earthly course, grant mercy unto us, and peace, and a return unto Thee. Amen. Bill Wagoner (A)

A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND BLESSINGS FOR 1995

703rd Tank Destroyer Bn. Association

Frank Miller, President
P.O.Box 154, 23 Conifer Lane
Hurley, NY 12443

John Czajkowski, Vice President
P.O. Box 91 43 Sunnyside
Yantic, CT 06389

Robert Downey, (C) Recording-Secretary
90 Elm Street
Oneonta, NY 12443

Florence C. Goldberg, (A) Treasurer
86 New England Ave. #50
Summit, NJ 07901

Harold Paulson, (C) Chaplain
P.O. Box 271 Private Road
Yaphank, NY 11980

Everett Stites, (RCN) Liaison
581 Forest Drive
Rivervale, NJ 07675



703rd ROAD BLOCK

Nathan Goldberg, Editor
86 New England Ave. # 50
Summit, New Jersey 07901

Date of Issue
Vol. V #4, December, 1994

FIRST CLASS MAIL

