



703rd Road Block



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

Vol. VI #2 703rd Tank Destroyer Battalion Association Newsletter June/1995

REPOAT, RAHT NOW, SOLDJA!

Valley Forge, Pa. REUNION Registration
Third Armored Division Association
P.O. Box 61743 Phoenix, AZ 85082-1743
(602) 840-0398
Wednesday-Saturday, 9/13-16/1995
\$40/person, banquet included, Ladies Luncheon/\$15.00.

Col. Showalter will miss the banquet, but wants to dine with everyone on Thursday, the night before!

SHERATON VALLEY FORGE HOTEL

1160 First Ave. King of Prussia, PA. 19046 (610) 337-2000
Exit 24 Pa.Tpk. Turn S. on US 76 to Exit 25 to curve N. on 23.

Single or double (2 persons) \$69/room
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RENEWAL TIME Third Armored 1995 membership dues
are \$15. Life Membership \$90

T A P S

Arthur Eugene Stoll, Sr. (B)

"Art stayed with myelodysplasia [defective development of any part (especially the lower segments) of the spinal cord]-never did reach the leukemia stage. He was struck with a cerebral hemorrhage on 3/13, and died peacefully on 3/14, [at 78], at 2230. He was cremated and our son, Art, Jr. who is a charter boat operator as his second job, will scatter Art's ashes on the Pacific Ocean on Memorial Day. The Masonic Memorial Service was touching and impressive."

Anna R. Stoll P.O. Box C
Lincoln City, OR 97367

Earl H. Dickenson

Earl checked out 3/20/95, his wife 9 mos. earlier, on 6/19/94. Their son, Earl S. Dickenson informed us, "He was proud of his army past."
Earl S. Dickenson (Son)
Earl H. Dickenson 24 Trolley Car Lane
75 W. North St. Londonderry, NH 03053
Ilion, N.Y. 13357 603 437 0549

Joseph Sholtis (Hq.)

Joe was 73, taken 12/19/94. Gladys spoke to John Strahosky (C) at the funeral. She enjoys reading the Road Block. 103 Zen St., Monongahela, PA 15063 412 258 8004

Henry Lesczynski (2A)

After suffering many illnesses, "Hank" was taken Saturday, June 10, 1995. As best we can, we join Elizabeth in her grief.

P.O. Box 463, Pine Bush, NY 12566

WILL IT BE A DRY SEASON?

Suddenly, the flow of your dues dollars into our coffers has just about ceased. As of 6/22/95 we have 80 paid-up members. That includes seven life members, each who gave \$75.00. Life Membership is a good deal! Surely we'll have 100 paid up members before long. Let's make it! Please send a message along with your check, a message that reflects your questions, your opinions, yourselves!

Make the \$20 check out to the 703rd T.D. Bn. and forward it to:
Florence C. Goldberg, Treasurer 86 New England Ave. #50
Summit, N.J. 07901

WORD FROM THE FRONT

THE OUTPOST ON THE MONONGAHELA

Dale Hamilton (Hq.) needs his buddies' encouragement. His "Doc", performed a knee operation months ago with little progress. He and Laverne live at P.O. Box 407, 508 Lynn St., Roscoe, PA 15477 412 938 2829.

Strahosky is confident he'll make it to Valley Forge, and that both he and Hamilton will be there for the battalion reunion, Spring, 1966. 46 Locust Ave., Charleroi, PA 15022-2537.

Florence and Nathan Goro (2C) have come into our association as life members, and we hope we'll see them at our reunions. Nate drove "Hap" Paulson.

140-9 DeKruif Place, Bronx, NY 10475

S. Strother Jr. and Betsy Smith (A, Hq) continue to stress their confidence in our association with their life membership.

463 Blair Road, Richmond, VA 23233

Leo and Agnes Sinn (Hq) backed up their hope to make it to Valley Forge with their check for \$75.00 making them life members. Their enthusiasm is catching on. Let's join them!

307 West Johnson Avenue

Warren, MN 55762 218 745 5134

Hugh and Winkie Livengood (Hq, Rcn, B) felt put "under threat of excommunication", if they didn't, so they became life members.

9 Rodman Lane, Westfield, NJ 07090

Hazel Crochetièrre and Bill (B), 631 Mixville Rd., Cheshire, CT 06410, are on the mend. She had fallen badly. They had visitors in April, Jennie and John Czajkowski (B) 43 Sunnyside, Yantic, CT 06389, who also visited Stan Malinowski (Rcn,B). That trio are looking forward to being with us at Valley Forge. Stan had been under surgery. Drop him a line or call, because all of us want the best for him. Stan's at 69 Biruya St., New Britain, CT 06053. 203 224 2327.

Frank and Sue Walker (A) Rte. 2, P.O.Box 776, Sweeny, TX 77480, have their three grandsons living with them. They added an exchange student from Barcelona, Spain, this year and the added joy of having the lad's parents visit with them. Sue writes that the Sweeny schools are hosts to five foreign students, two from Germany with little knowledge of W.W. II, and all five occasionally gather in the Walker home.

Back in 1975 our daughter, Laura, asked us if we would permit her to have a young lady from Norway stay with us for a year. The program was that of the American Field Services (Quaker) and our high school. What a joy! We have visited her twice since. Great folks, and what a country! Editor

NEWS OF A BOLD SOLDIER

On 2/28/95 Don McKiernan (3A) returned to active play with his championship softball team. Batting leadoff and playing the out field he had several hits including one in "the 9th" to drive in the winning run. He's lightning in the outfield and on the bases.

On 12/12/94 Don had a heart attack. He was in ICU for 3 days and came home on the 17th. He passed the stress test for his heart condition on 1/27/95 with flying colors.

His children and grandchildren flew out from New York and Chicago to be with him and Yolana for Christmas and New Years holidays.

On 1/23/95 he resumed his voluntary teaching at an elementary school. He enjoys helping many children from many countries.

3 1/2 years earlier, Don underwent surgery to remove a cancerous kidney, correct a blood condition and prostate surgery, 3 operations, in 8 days. He returned in the lineup of the softball team that summer to lead them to championships for 4 years. At 75 he is the oldest player on his team limited to men 55 or over. They play 9 inning games, 100 game schedules and some doubleheaders. Former minor and major leaguers participate.

Don loves to write poetry in the early morning. His poems are read in the schools,

at senior centers, printed in anthologies and newspapers.

Don and Yolana came to Carlsbad, California in 6/88, "a wonderful place to live with its super recreational programs, facilities year round. Cultural activities are very meaningful for senior citizens. Health care is excellent as are the physicians and hospital.

We have been fortunate in our area, no earthquakes, floods, fires or mud slides! Our California venture gets better every year! We hope things are well for you.

From out west,--send our best!"

Yolana and Don McKiernan (3A)

Ed and Maja Hoy (Rcn,Hq) 4627 Vista Dr., Cottonwood, AZ, 86326, may get to Europe next March with an added goal, visiting with the 1944 Allied Remember Group [See R.B. VI,1,3/95,5] near Charleroi in Belgium. If the Hoys will write them, the A.R.G. will put them on their mailing list to receive a fine newsletter (French). There is more on the A.R.G. below.

The Hoys have a daughter they'll visit on Cape Cod this summer, and before that his terminally ill brother.

Don Belland (B) and Leon Michaud (Rcn) have written the Hoys in recent months.

QUITE A COINCIDENCE!

"My local tailor works with an associate who is Jewish. Recently I learned that the associate spent his early life in Fleron, Belgium, the very town that is looking for the name of the American soldier to be placed on a plaque of honor now in the town square. [See VI,1, 3/95, 2-3, 6]

When the Nazi occupation officials were there, he was hidden in cellars by friends and learned that his immediate family was taken away. After four years of hiding this way, and with no knowledge of uniform designation, German or other, he was surprised, one day, as he peeked outward and found

"black" men and their vehicles outside his hiding place. The Germans had no "blacks" in their army, thus they might mean freedom, and they did." Everett Stites (Rcn)

JUNIOR 703RDRS!

Your chairman, Frank Miller (A) has welcomed the 1944 Allied Remember Group, President Andrè Deschepper, 153 Rue du Louat 6240 Farciennes, Belgium, as representatives of our battalion as they participate in the 50 year ceremonies honoring U.S. veterans for our role in their liberation in World War II.

"We, the 703rd Tank Destroyer Association were truly surprised, and pleased that you have formed a 703 Battalion (sic) in an area which we will always remember. We had in that area a great battle, a greater victory, and found a people who really appreciated our efforts. Your enthusiasm and true friendliness was the greatest which we had encountered anywhere on your continent. We had been quite exhausted by the prior months of continual warfare, and your attitude did much to enable us to continue on towards final victory.

As we survivors average in age 78 years, we can believe that your association will outlive ours, and hope you realize that our best wishes are with you always.

May your spirits burn as brightly forever.
With love and appreciation.

Your Parent 703rd T.D. Bn. Assoc. President
Frank L. Miller"

See: R.B. VI, 1, 3/95, 5

Soon we hope to report to our members more of what the A.R.G. is doing, and exactly what U.S. W.W. II equipment they own. They are asking questions of us which reveal how precisely they wish to look like us at commemoration affairs; how did the 703rd mark its vehicles, where should the shoulder patches etc. be placed on uniform jackets, they want true replacement parts for their vehicles instead of the poor facsimiles being sold them by European manufacturers.

Their first newsletter to us carried the technical details of the "hitch" for the trailer on a jeep, the second, La Carabine, U.S. M1 [In French]. They want to know our

battalion table of organization. Their most specific question was for information on our Reconnaissance Co. What vehicles and weapons did they have? They want to learn the part their jeeps, or other U.S. equipment they own, played in their liberation! At a recent meeting they discussed taking their group to a rally of "The World's Largest Collection of [privately owned] Historic Military Vehicles, 7/22-3/1995, N. Tonbridge, Kent." On 5/6-7/95 on an athletic field at Floreffe they will help recreate a signal corps unit of the 101st Airborne Division. The sponsoring organization has on its letterhead, 101st AB-326 E, Military Vehicle Club, Belgium.

They would enjoy very much a visit from our members. Tentatively, Ed and Maja Hoy (Rcn-Hq.) want to visit folks in Europe sometime in 1996. The 1944's A.R.G. has offered to send them their newsletters regularly. In future Road Blocks your editor will report their essential content. I hope that when I call upon you to help strengthen our relationship with them, you'll come through.

At their meeting of 4/7/95 with 31 members present, André Deschepper, their president, reminded them that he had previously reported on what the 703rd had done to have them represent us. Your editor sent him much material that they translate into French for their 1944's A.R.G. newsletters.

Below is a talk of the 1944's A.R.G. chairman at a recent meeting. The translation was by your editor.

Dear Friends,

As you know, our executive board had contacted the veterans' association of the 703rd Tank Destroyer Bn. of the U.S. in order to knot ties of friendship with them.

To this day we have not yet received an official response, but as the first sign of response, we received their last bulletin of 1944 entitled, Road Block. You will find its heading later in this newsletter.

Those newsletters are true documents. They narrate events that occurred between 1943 and 1945, but equally retrace the tragic events that these veterans of the 703rd T.D. Bn. experienced from debarcation till armistice. Since these accounts are personal recollections,

we have felt it proper to get permission to communicate with them through our newsletter. That has been accorded us.

At the same time we have received most of the issues of the Road Blocks [begun in 1990], the listing of their bivouacs as they marched through Belgium till the end of hostilities, as well as the official Summary of Operation of the 703rd T.D. Bn. for the first two weeks of September, 1944.

The last issues of our newsletter have been sent to their executive committee so as to let them know what we are doing. They discuss our organization in their first issue of the Road Block for 1995, asking that their members agree that we keep in permanent contact. Let's be patient and await their decision.

It is not my intention to translate in their entirety the items from their newsletters, but as I signalled in our last meeting, we'll let you know what these veterans went through. Moreover you will find the march route of the 703rd on a later page. Also in this newsletter and every month, there'll be an extract of their Summary of Operations.

André Deschepper

HARD TO BELIEVE !

Co. "A", Camp Polk, Louisiana

March 6, 1942

A General complimented us for our saluting so we were given a half holiday. I went over to the No. 1 Post Exchange and the Service Club. The "P.X." is like a department store. One counter sells magazines, candy and cookies, another tobacco, another toilet articles, field kits, etc., another, officers' uniforms, and another, tonic and beer. The prices are not out of line with those back home. There are job openings. In the Service Club it was different. Upon entering you are facing a dance floor encircled by a balcony. Up there they have a library and writing tables. Along the railing there are attached division emblems. During the afternoon pingpong tables are placed along the dance floor. In a neat cafeteria I bought a bacon, lettuce sandwich on toasted whole wheat, and had a glass of milk, all for \$.15. I bought a field kit for bivouac ("Monete" bag), shoe polish, stamped envelopes, and tobacco.

March 7, 1942

We had a competitive drill and Co. "B" won. We finished last of the three units competing. I guess that we'll "get it", as losers do, every morning next week! In the afternoon plenty of athletics. I did five laps around the company area, about 250 yds. a lap with a swell shower afterwards. No K.P. tomorrow, but special detail. In the evening. I spoke to Murphy from the Medics who is a Dartmouth graduate. He had suffered a "6-Day K.P." for wearing his hat in the presence of a Lt. Colonel inside the Medics Dispensary. A general dropping of morale was developing with expressions of defiance, and devil-may-care attitudes for loss of contact with home and friends.

March 8, 1942

I was on special detail again, today. As it turned out I almost enjoyed it. I was awakened by Corporal-in-Charge Wade, a short, blonde Floridian youth. After a hearty breakfast, Nate Falk, a chunky lad from New Britain, Connecticut, and I chopped and filled the orderly room wood box. Outside it was raw-cold, making the axe a pleasant instrument of warmth. I am becoming quite efficient with the long-handled "cut-up"! We then scrubbed the latrine area, raked out the inside and outside, cleaning it till it was "good enough to eat in!" Poring oil on the excretions prevented the odor from coming up and suffocating the users of the facility.

After a fine chicken dinner we dug a hole in soft clay, 4'x 4'x 3' to be used as a trash pit. Cpl. Wade, in an overcoat, superintended and froze, as we enjoyed the virile exercise. After this we chopped more wood for the orderly room.

Through with that, I got to the Supply Sergeant for a light bulb for our tent, running to our tent to put it in, and back to the orderly room. There was Cpl. Wade to blast away at me for having left. We had been working W.P.A. style all morning and afternoon. I took five minutes to help myself and four tentmates, and I get bawled out.

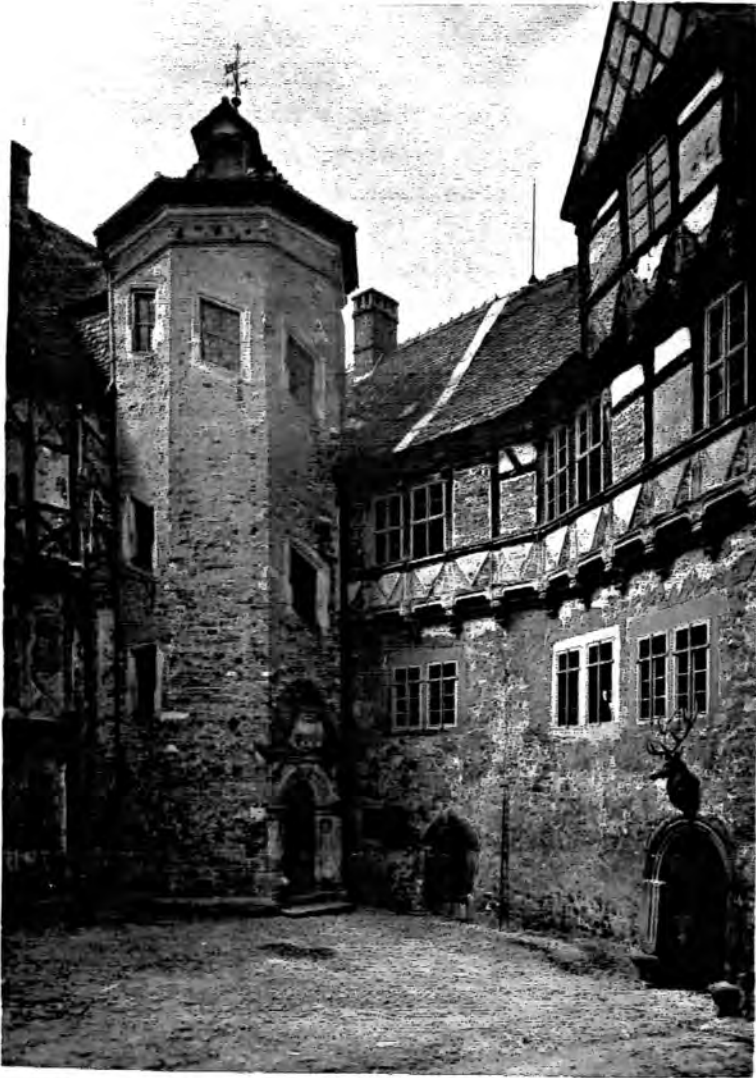
There are, truly, two ways around here, the right way and the army's way.

One disappointment that "burned me up" was my inability to attend a dance at Jasper, Texas, Saturday evening, 60 miles away, because I was on that detail. The lads did not get back till 0300, and they had a good time. Nice girls made the evening most pleasant. What griped the G.I.'s was that they danced but half a set with one girl before they were tapped and required to change partners. They just would not permit the girls to become "chummy"! That's the army for you!

March 9, 1942

Calisthenics,--drill. Terrible drill, and I'm sure the reason for this was our continued restriction. If we had been permitted to leave the post for a few hours, I'm certain that our attitude toward our Non-coms would have resulted in a finer drill. We received first echelon instruction in truck driving in the morning as well. First echelon is driver check upon all external features of the 2.5 ton, ten wheel truck, checking gas, tires, guages, leaks, etc. We had some added practice with a grease gun. After lunch we had a lecture given by a Propaganda Sergeant (my own title). Everything he speaks about, of course, has been censored. Not one aspect of his talk was unknown to everyone who had to listen. There was no discussion of details. It is and probably will continue to be the most boring of sessions, ever! Later in the week they continued to talk on the topic, "What The U.S. Has Been Doing". This time the Sergeant said he'd allow individual opinions. They were as detailed and individual as my O.D. pants.

We hiked about 1.5 miles and drove trucks the rest of the afternoon. Concentrating on driving a heavy vehicle makes one forget his little cares. It was hot and sunny, but a swell breeze made it almost perfect. Pretty yellow flowers could be seen blooming in the front yards of the "white trash". As I drove, I spoke to my instructor concerning the poor living conditions of the people in the section. He told me that money wasn't everything, and that these people were perfectly happy, and satisfied. There is some truth in what he said. Their lack of education and love of the soil, neutralizes any new desires that might attract them away. Yet these conditions are not conducive to health and decent living. A family should live in better shelters than shacks and latrines. We, up North, are fortunate!



Falkenstein Castle, Selketal Osthartz
Archives, Art Treasures

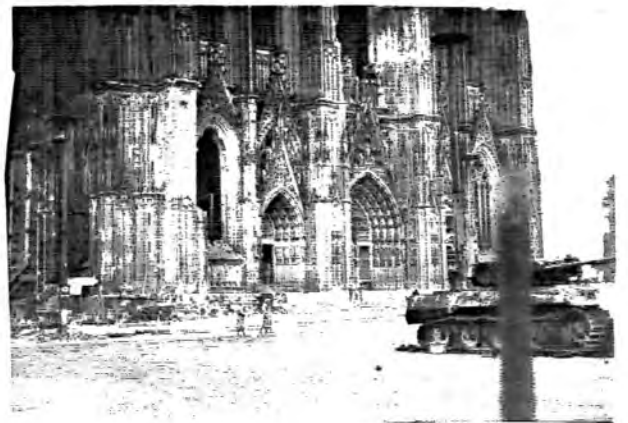


Steven W. Popovitch (C)

1942



Art and Ann Stoll (B) Reno, 1990



Cologne, March, 1945



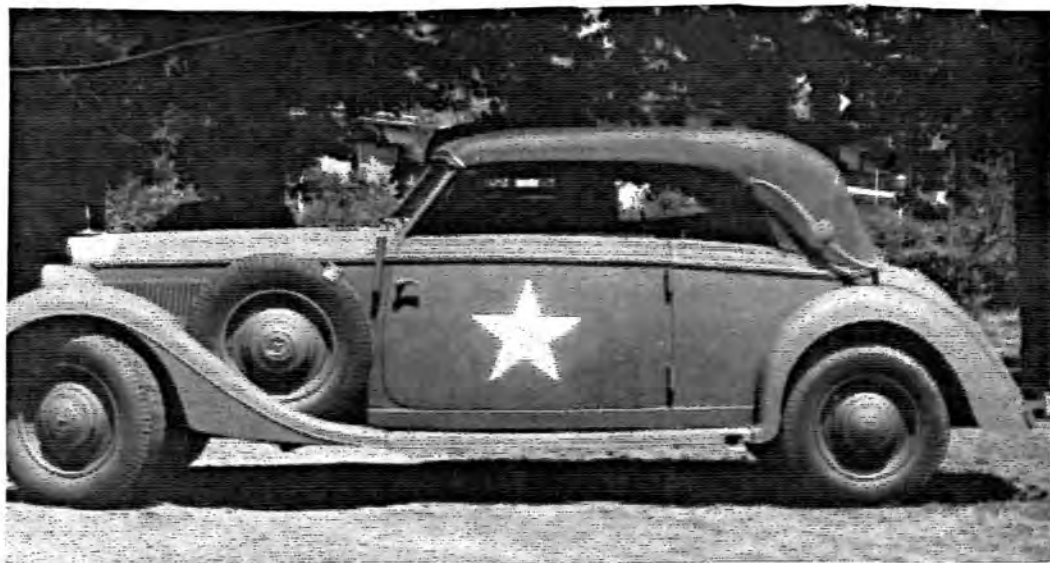
Don McKiernan (A) 1994



Louis Ruiz, Larry Bretschneider, Jim Santino
Clarence Picha
John Cox "A" Co. John Prior



Lt. Col. Showalter Capt. Dearden



Bob Ingram, Merle Goodrich, Evan Regas
used this heap for a trip to the
French coast.



Capt. Regas Lt. Col. Showalter

In the evening we were marched down to the field house to listen to John Malone, government representative, former University of Heidelberg student. What is most damaging to his character is that he's a newspaperman. His topic was, "Europe Under Hitler. He spoke quite a bit about German trickery. I would call it efficiency. He strung out his talk with tales of rape, thievery, etc. One yarn was about the Germans selling plundered grain to the original owners for planting. He told about the Czech worker who killed 17 Hun officers by dropping molten steel upon them. He suggested we help saboteurs. They are dirty dogs if they harm us, but princes if they hurt the enemy. Malone said he was a friend of Walther van Sturm who trained German youth. He had visited him in the Royal Palace in Vienna. Sturm is now governor of Austria. Sturm had his feet cocked on his desk. He claimed his success with German Youth was because he had taught them how to "hate so heartily".

Hitler is nothing much. "He only put the machinery made for him (German history and philosophy) into motion." Germans believe everything he preaches. Germans' thoughts must be changed even if it takes 5100 years. Van Sturm talked about the Germans educated in Norway. A school for invasion was begun 18 months before the invasion was to start. This was admitted in their own newspapers. When Malone had finished someone asked him if the Germans had planned their government for the United States. His answer in the affirmative closed with the information that their capital would be in Milwaukee.

Editor

EXACTITUDE IS NOT TRUTH Matisse

Recalling yarns of events that occurred fifty years ago, should leave the listener or reader tolerant of the teller. Pat him on the back! At least the teller believes and tells it as if it occurred the other day! If no one else has a version of the event to tell, you appear to have the truth from the original yarnspinner. Here's one for size.

Col. Showalter sent your editor a section out of a recent, Stars and Stripes, that had a motley selection of scenes of the "Bulge". One was an M-10, parked in the snow, with much of its crew outside. The location stated was, Courtil, Belgium in mid-January, 1945. Our C.O. wanted to know the location of the village. If it was where we had been in action, then that M-10 could have been ours. Maybe we could get a print!

Fortunately, the division history, Spearhead In The West, (229) located Courtil for us, and it was where we could have been on the drive to end the "Bulge". Then your editor had to ask himself whether we still had M-10's on that drive south to Houffalize to pinch off the "Bulge" with Patton coming north?

The Summary of Operations of the 703rd states that the battalion received 18 M-36's (90mm) on 9/30/44, 14 on 10/17/44, and

the last 4 on 10/20/44. Our Bn. C.O. wrote me about the 1452 rounds of 3" we fired 10/17 and 10/20/44; "we did so to protect the artillery ammo supply---especially since we were getting rid of the M-10's anyway!"

On 12/5 and 12/9/44 a 90mm. gun of Co."C" was test-fired against the armorplate of German tanks. With that backup evidence that we had our M-36's long before closing off the "Bulge", how could your editor but say the M-10 in that picture was not ours?

Frank Miller wrote Col. Showalter the following:

"Nate [[Your editor]] thinks everyone had M-36 TD's before we went to the Bulge, 12/17/44. The 3A was not fully outfitted. We got ours, finally, in Mausbach after the fracas."

[A.A.R. (After Action Report) Summary--10/17/44 Total TD's in the Bn. 32 M-36's and 4 M-10's.--10/19/44, 1 sect. of 90's replaced 3" guns on R.B. vic. Mausbach. --Counterbattery killed Nordby (A)]

10/20/44 Fired 1106 rds. 3" ammo. 191800-200600 (12/19/44 1800-12/20/44 0600). Rec'd. last 4 M-36's, 36 total authorized. No longer in the AAR does it report that any 3" ammo was used.]

12/21/44 The A.A.R. states that Co. "A", working with the 16th Inf. Regt. (Big Red ONE) had 12 M-36's operational.

"I took a couple of pictures while we were changing over. As a matter of fact, I and Donovan Ferrel, driver, nursed one M-10 back from the Bulge with only 1 track with power,-- took us two days, unescorted!"

On Christmas day the battalion was ordered to rejoin the 3rd Armored Div. It moved west to the Werbemont-Chevrons-Neuville area in four hours. 3A was 2 days behind at Spa. Thus, at least, the record supports Frank who had to "drag ass" with what he says was an M-10. But 'round Christmas time he was near Spa, not heading to Mausbach. Soon after 12/25/44 we were "off the line" preparing to go on the offensive, 1/3/45, toward Vaux and Houffalize. Around 1/20/45, what was left of German forces in the "Bulge" had skipped back, and the battalion was back around Mausbach. Is this where Frank recalls they had to have received an M-36?

Frank continues to support his point with a very good argument! "----The M-10 Diesel could sneak up in low gear on enemy units.

We did that in taking out one tank near Stettigny at the tail end of the Bulge. [1/15-16/45]. Never could have done that with an M-36, everyone within a mile could hear the gas engines. The diesel in low gear could only be heard if you were behind it. Also, when I froze my feet, I had to use the gas for the Little Joe to thaw my shoes so I could get my feet out of them. With M-36's there would have been lots of gas, [but] we had about 1 gal. At one point in the Bulge we had diesel fuel airdropped for us, --marked the drop with 3 panels. My memory has not deteriorated to such an extent-----".

Frank has further support for his argument that the battalion still had M-10's till around 1/20/45, after the M-10 K.O.'d a German tank at Stettigny, that Frank feels was the end of the "fracas".

"It is going to take a lot to convince me [Paulson] that I had any of the new .90's until after the drive toward Vaux [mid-January, 1945]!" See Road Block, II,4, 12/1991, p.5.

The battalion needed replacement vehicles getting ready for the

drive to the Rhine in February-March, 1945. "Hap's" platoon, 2C, was short TD's, indeed!

John Balmes (A) led 3A. We have a Christmas story, 1944, of his in the Road Block II, 4, 12/1991, p.1. Could he help relevant to Frank's yarn of M-10's in the platoon around Christmas day, 1944?

Your editor should believe Frank and "Hap"! At least 2 of those M-36's must have been down in the battalion motor pool! Capt. Bill Smith, in charge back there, after getting them in shape, probably never had a chance to get them up to "A" and "C" Companies. Indeed!

The records clearly assert that the battalion received 36 M-36's by 10/17/44. They also state that "A" Co. had a full complement of 12 M-36's on 12/21/44.

So very much of concern happened in that period,-- the mis-judgments that let "Jerry" breakthrough so disastrously into Belgium, the good show on the use and behavior of our battalion working with the 1st Infantry and the 82nd Airborne, the frozen feet, the dead comrades, the differences between "Monty" and "Ike" on how to attack to end the war. So what's the fuss over 2 M-10's and 2 M-36's?

Colonel, Sir, should I write to, The Stars and Stripes, requesting an 8" x 10" enlargement of the picture of that M-10? We might recognize the men in the snow as our own!

Editor

THE LATEST REPORT ON THE PLAQUE AT FLERON
Road Block, VI, 1, 3/1995 p. 2-3.

Promptly, on 2/11/95, Henri Rogister wrote in response to our mailing of materials and suggestions to help him learn who the G.I. was who was killed at Fleron on 9/7/44. The folks in that community, SSE of Liège, want to honor him since he gave his life to free them from the Nazis.

As we assumed, Dierin Patard, a small hamlet with a colliery NNW of Liège, where "A" Co. coiled, and Clarence Gann killed, was too far away to qualify him for their plaque.

Henri states firmly that the soldier was killed at coordinates close to two 1B road blocks. That is why Henri thought the 703rd might have the answer. He needs the records of Task Force Lovelady for possible help.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DIARY

"9 Sept 44 (?) - 15 Sept 44

I'm not sure of my last entry, but from Mons, where plenty of prisoners and killed were recorded by our 3rd Arm'd Div. and the

703rd against the Germans, we headed for Namur and set up a road block on the north of the city. CCB to the south could not cross the river what with blown out bridges, thus we waited till the 1st and the 9th division followed in the rear by the 4th, could come up and clean out the towns. These all night stands in a city street are not fun. We then started for Liège, and, again, CCA, my group under Brig. Gen'l. Hickey, was north of the Meuse. CCB under Brig. Bohn to the south and the Inf. Divs. tailing along. It was at the town of Fleurus (?) that Woolner and Gri, who was my driver on some CPX's in England, was killed by a tree burst. He was in a fox-hole, too.**

* Editor was in 1A. At 0800 on 9/15/44, that company was in the vicinity of EYNATTEW about to go through the Siegfried Line.

** Woolner and Gri, with a jeep had been transferred to Division Headquarters much earlier. Woolner, a journalist, was used both in getting news items, and bringing written orders and maps to forward headquarters. Woolner, recently deceased, wrote me not too long ago that when he and Gri drove to combat command headquarters at Fleurus (FLERON?) he delivered the documents as ordered when German "mail" interrupted. He had left Gri and the jeep some distance away and was out of their sight when he had to "hit the dirt" under a vehicle. (See RoadBlock, I, 1, 4, 3/1990. Correction: Gri was an Italian-American.)

If Fleurus actually was Fleron, and CCB Headquarters was in Fleron at the time Woolner completed his mission, then Gri died in the fight for Fleron. The difficulty is that CCB tanks certainly fought through the town before CCB HQ got there, and suffered casualties. My diary information written days after the event was second hand without stating its source, or a specific date for Gri's death. We could ask Col. Haynes W. Dugan, Div. Historian, one of Woolner's superiors at the time and a member of our association! We'll see him in good health, we hope at Valley Forge, and he'll tell us!

Editor

OUR LEADERSHIP

H.Q. 703rd T.D. Bn. 1/18/45

"The Bulge" 12/18/44

TANK DESTROYER OPERATIONS IV

1C moved to Dom Bütgenbach, one section on the hill just north of the town, field of fire east and northeast, one section just east of the town, field of fire east and southeast. 2C also moved further forward, one section taking up positions in the vicinity of (K2903), field of fire south and southwest, the other section moving to (K910035), covering the two roads approaching Bütgenbach from the southwest, 3C remained in mobile reserve at Bütgenbach, prepared to move to any threatened area.

During these two days that the enemy was probing our defenses, and we were consolidating our positions, the eleven 90 mm. AA guns were utilized for defense in depth, and were set up in the vicinity of Sourbrodt, Ovifal, and Robertsville, covering tank approaches from the east, south, and southwest. In addition, preliminary work in constructing mine field barriers started in front of our infantry positions along tank approaches. The 2nd Bn., 18th Inf. Regt., which had been occupied in the north mopping up German paratroops, had, meanwhile, moved into Bütgenbach, and the remainder of the regiment was expected shortly to take over part of the 1st Inf. Division sector.

On the morning of 12/21/44, the Germans made their largest attack up to that time, finally deviating from their small probes in a determined effort to drive to drive the 26th Inf. from their commanding positions. They first dropped an intense artillery barrage into the Bütgenbach area at 0400, but it was 0900 before the major effort took place. A battalion of infantry supported by several tanks attacked from the S. and SE. with the mission of taking Bütgenbach. The leading company was stopped dead, but the following units pushed on. The infantry was finally pushed back, and five tanks succeeded in penetrating into the Division area. Three of

these were shortly destroyed, but two got into the village of Dom Bütgenbach, considerably annoying members of a Bn. CP located in one of the buildings.

When the attack took place, 3C was alerted. As the struggle grew in intensity it was ordered to proceed to the vicinity of Dom Bütgenbach to knock or drive out the intruders. After moving hurriedly to the outskirts of Dom Bütgenbach, the platoon leader stopped his platoon, obtained the situation, made his plans and went into action. One section moved into town to try and find positions from which to place fire on the two loose tanks, leaving the other section to cover its advance. Before any positions could be reached, however, one of the tanks decided to break for the woods south of the town and return to safer haunts, but although his intentions were good, unfortunately for him he didn't quite make it. The section that was on the outskirts of the town knocked him out with a round through the rear while he was a few hundred yards short of his goal. The second tank decided it would have a better chance of escape after dark. The waiting section fired several rounds, but could not observe the results. It was not known until the following day that it had also been knocked out from the rear.

At the time this action took place it would seem that 1C, which was much closer to the town when the two tanks got in, would logically be the one to go after them. However, they were in such a position that, had they moved into the town from the E. or NE. they would have had no cover, and would have been under direct observation. It was therefore thought best to move the T.D.'s in from the W. where they could have access to the buildings from concealed routes.

(Continued)

Seek, Strike and E N J O Y !

The 703rd T.D. Bn. Reunion, May 19-21, 1996
Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Hershey-Harrisburg, Pa.
The Holiday Inn, Grantville, Pa. 17028
Exit 28, I-81, 1-800-405-1328
B E T H E R E !

**Minutes of Meeting of Executive
Committee**

On Friday, 6/9/95 the committee met under Frank Miller in Hurley, N.Y., and was called to order at 1340.

PRESENT:

Frank Miller, President John Czajkowski, P.P. Bob Downey, Sec'y
Florence C. Goldberg, Treas. Nat Goldberg, R.B., E. Stites, LN.
Marge Miller, Jennie Czajkowski, Joan Millham.

ABSENT: Ernie Coloura

TREASURER'S REPORT = \$4027.52

old business: A brief discussion reviewed a favorable visit to Hershey-Harrisburg, with the goal being a site for our reunion.

NEW BUSINESS: The President and the Executive Committee examined a contract for the reunion at the Holiday Inn in Grantville, Pa. It was approved by the committee, signed and was to be returned. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to making reunion arrangements as follows:

1. A deposit of \$250.00 would be submitted as of the contract.
2. Everett Stites will have the reunion program printed.
3. V.P. John Czajkowski will develop a program for the reunion with the recommendations of the following:
 - Greetings- Frank Miller Roll Call- Henry Gosch
 - Invocation- "Hap" Paulson Speaker- Col. Showalter
 - Commentary- Frank Miller
 - Introduction of New Officers- Frank Miller
 - Remarks of New President
 - Benediction- "Hap" Paulson

John Czajkowski will contact one member in the following states to assist him in contacting Association members in those states to develop interest in attending the reunion. Those designated as contact persons are:

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| AZ - Ed Hoy | CT - Bill Crochetiere | FL - "Hap" Paulson |
| IL - Leonard Straub | MA - Jack Moriarty | MD - Claude Ball |
| MI - Bob Schutt | MO - Fred Hunt | NJ - Henry Gosch |
| NY - Seaton Perry | RI - Jim Roberts | TX - Merle Goodrich |
| PA - Aulay Tompkins | | |

4. Sometime in advance of the reunion, each member who will attend will be asked to send to our Treasurer \$10.00 to assist in defraying some of the cost of the food and snacks for the hospitality room.
A 50/50 raffle will be held each day to assist in helping to defray these costs.
5. Additional authorized expenditures from the association treasury were authorized for the following:
 - a. Printing costs b. Any signage required
 Any commemorative souvenirs

The meeting was adjourned at 1445 to meet again at the call of the President.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Downey - Treasurer

R E V E I L L E !

"Aulay and Isabel Tomkins were the greatest of help in our efforts. They live in Hershey and helped guide us, discussing our needs with various hotels. We were able to arrive at favorable terms with the Holiday Inn, Grantville-Hershey, Grantville, Pa.

TERMS:- 1-4 persons per room - \$60 plus 6% tax - nice rooms.

We get a Hospitality Room - no extra cost.

We get a Banquet Room for our dinner on Tuesday, the 21st at no cost. Dinner actual cost per person will depend on what menu we want, which is not definite, but will cost approximately \$24.00 per person including tax and gratuities.

At the moment they are holding 40 rooms, but if your reservations are made very soon, we may be able to hold more. Some of us have already registered. Register soon - be certain of a room.

Reservations must be made by each individual with the Holiday Inn. This can be done with a check deposit for \$60.00 plus tax, or by credit card. By April 1 we must have an accurate count in order for the hotel to preplan the number of rooms and count of number for the dinner. In need of it - cancellation can be made anytime up to May 15, 1996 without losing your deposit.

If the Holiday Inn is advised of your plane arrival date and time three days before your arrival, they will pick you up at the Harrisburg Airport.

The Holiday Inn is immediately accessible from Exit 28, I-81, and is so close you can see it from there. Their food is excellent, a wide variety and reasonable. Hershey is a city with interesting places to go and see, lots of shopping nearby.

Hotel reservation cards will be included with the September, Road Block.

We will have certain costs for beverages, snacks, etc. for the Hospitality Room. So that the Executive Committee will not have to "put it up", please send \$10.00 in advance to Florence C. Goldberg, Treas., 86 New England Ave. #50, Summit, N.J., 07901.

As you can see, we have been busy, and have gotten results. Now it is up to each and every one of our family to make this reunion the biggest and best ever. We can do it!"

Faithfully, Frank and Marge

WHAT SAY GENTLEMEN? !

The Road Block has been the bivouac of "A" Co. lately. Your editor needs to have pictures, yarns, and news from the men and women of other companies in order to best serve our membership. Those photos, notes with your dues checks will truly help. Your comment on what others have written in the Road Block, your description of a specific experience, or a remembrance in the service or since then, sure would make it a better newsletter. It would help others do the same. Editor

703rd Tank Destroyer Bn. Association

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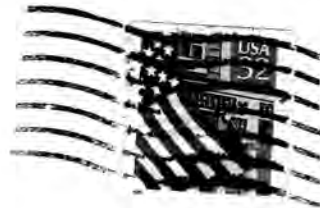
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703rd ROAD BLOCK

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