



703rd Road Block



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

Vol. VII #1 703rd Tank Destroyer Battalion Association Newsletter March, 1996

Blunt, Blunt, B L U N T !

You know I come to the point, pronto! At this moment, February 22, we have the following registrations for our REUNION!

Showalter, W. Ball, C.	Williamson, J.W.	Tomkins, A.	Carlson, O.M.	Jarvis, P.	Michalowski, T.	Popovitch, S.	Gosch, H.
Miller, F.	Cerrito, J.	Hallabrin, P.	Mitch, J.	Santino, J.	Backus, S.	Minick, E.	Roberts, J.
Hoy, E.	Erwin, J.	McIntyre, E.	Stites, E.	Schutt, R.	Hickman, S.	McKiernan, D.	Goldberg, N.
Czajkowski, J.	Wagoner, W.	Dearden, M.	Straub, L.	Toma, G.	Perry, S.	Onopa, P.	Mantro, R.

ATTENTION: Hotel Advisories. 1. Reservations made after 4/28/96 to be billed at \$109.00 per night.
 2. Pickup at Harrisburg Int'l. Airport? Tell hotel 3 days ahead. Give them flight no., date and time of arrival. 3. Need a handicap-equipped room? Ask hotel NOW! 1-717-469-0661.

This could be the last opportunity for you to meet with your particular buddy, and all those great people. I really don't have to emphasize that our time is getting short,--we know it! Therefore, make the supreme effort! Make arrangements to come to Hershey.

For our convenience we have reserved two vans without drivers, since most of us can drive anything on wheels, and can take turns at it. One van will transport fifteen, the other seven. Therefore we have to know ahead of time which places most would like to go so we can make the best use of the vans.

Some places we may go, and to which we could shuttle a lot:

1. Hershey Outlet Malls - 7 mile trip
2. Hershey Chocolate World - 7 mile trip
3. Hershey Formal Rose Garden - 7 miles
4. Manada Golf Course (Green Fees, \$9.00-Seniors) 3 miles
5. Penn National Race Track - You can see it from the motel.
6. Gettysburg National Park - All day trip, probably with much walking.
Would tie up the van for the whole day.
7. Shopping Outlets at Reading, probable full day trip.

We have to know which places you favor, so the vans can be used to best advantage.

Treasury funds will be used to pay for the vans so there will be no extra charge to you!

B E T H E R E , W I T H U S !

Frank L. Miller (A)

Normandy Northern France Rhineland Ardennes Central Europe

T A P S

AUBREY L. KROP (B)

Aubrey's sister, Odessa Wood, learned from the 12/1995 Road Block of our interest in him. Aubrey passed away September, 1994. Aubrey was captured with Jim Roberts and Sgt. Hart near Ranee, 8/15/1944.

She sent along copies of letters, one an official notice from the war department concerning Aubrey's being missing in action, the other from Lt. Burkett that Roberts escaped, Hart and Aubrey were alive, and P.O.W.'s. Aubrey spent the rest of the war in Stalag 7A. Postwar he worked for Fina Oil and Chemical for 35 years.

We have a question for Odessa. Did Aubrey give her any information on Sgt. Hart or have any later contact with him?

In a response, Odessa wrote that Aubrey never married, made 50000 miles a year in his pickup, trading it in every two years. and with all that mileage on his truck knew the back roads! Aubrey was a loner, yet with loads of friends. He never brought up his role in events in France or of his experiences in Stalag 7A, but answered what he was asked. He freely talked about the war.

He did not talk about Sgt. Hart or ever get to talk to him after getting back.

Odessa signed up and makes a most welcome new member of our association.

Odessa and Agnes Blake have been on the telephone recently! Agnes' brother Jim Wray (C) was killed in action in France. The ladies live close to each other.

Agnes Blake Odessa K. Wood
P.O. Box 1883 2221 Lynn Drive
Big Spring, TX 79720 Big Spring, TX 79720

JOSEPH TABERSKI (C)

He was tall, and his hair was silver. What a "gent",--loyal to our battalion a little more than most of us!

Frank Miller let us know of his death, today, on Washington's birthday. We were out buying a birthday gift for our grand daughter.

Rte. 2 Gloversville, 60 Sweet Sue Dr.
N.Y. 12078 W.Melbourne, FL 32904
518 883 3652 407 951 1364

SPEED UP THAT REUNION!

Talk about enthusiasm, wow! John and Laura Erwin (Hq) have made reservations for themselves, his brother, and sister-in-law for our reunion, indeed! "We are looking forward to this reunion, and waiting for May to get here just as fast as we can wait." John and Laura added to the pot, not only with what we recommended, but a sawbuck for "sweets"!

"If you can speed the coming of May -then go to it!-- Please say 'Hi' to any of the 'gang' that you see or contact, and tell them that we hope to see them there. Take care and keep it moving!"

John wrote that his writing is "scratching". Sure wish your editor could write with as much heart! Please get in touch with him!

John T. and Laura Erwin (C)

7458 White Ash Drive
South Haven MS 38671

NEVER LOST THAT SMILE

Hi Folks, December 7, 1995

--I can't keep up with the element of time. Comes August 24, 1996, Martha and I will celebrate our 50th year of wedded bliss. On October 12, 1996 I'll be "80"! I can't believe it,--take one day at a time, and one step at a time! But in the meantime we keep-busy with something. Weather here has been cool-but no snow-I can handle that. Hang in there folks and do take care.

Joe and Martha Moen (A) 5239 4th St.,NE,
Columbia Heights, MN 55421-1621

If, only, they could make it to our reunion next May. Let's wish them the health to be there!

LET'S WISH THE BEST FOR FLORENCE!

Jack and Florence Biddulph (C) will celebrate their 50th anniversary next month under difficult circumstances. Florence requires being on oxygen for every hour of the day, and sadly, the couple can't get to our reunion. Jack asked for a lapel pin, and

added a fine contribution to help the association. Let's encourage Florence to fight past her problem so that she and Jack will enjoy their wedding anniversary with progress towards better health. Maybe they'll join us for the division reunion in Fort Worth! Drop them a line of good cheer!

3413 Herrick, Flint, MI 48503

ONE FRIENDLIEST SMILE IN "A" CO.

A new life member with a T.D. cap sends his "make you feel better" grin, along with some money that "can be used for whatever you think best--maybe a few cold ones for the next reunion!"

Al and Imogene Miller (A) appreciate you. Let's let 'em know how we feel!

205 W.14th St. Lamar, MO. 64759

THE MURRAYS WILL TRY HARD TO BE THERE!

"---In and out of the hospital, but I guess we can't complain!" Clair and Glenna (A) are having a "bad back" winter! It will not shovel! They'll look for us at the May reunion and send blessings to all!

75 Old State Rd., Gardner, PA 17324

JIM'S PRIDE!

Jim Santino (A) keeps his guns registered on our battalion to visit Fort Mifflin in Philadelphia. 218 years ago the British pummeled the star-shaped enclave killing more than 100 colonial soldiers in a five day battle. On 11/10/95 "the British made amends" with a \$5000 check to the historical organization running the moat-encircled fort near the Philadelphia Int'l. Airport.

In his letter Jim put it neatly. "--have no need to promote Fort Mifflin, British said it all. 300 Americans against the British Empire, plus the siege of 1777! I was present [at the gift-giving!] There was the battle scene done the following day! Spectacular!"

"CHARLIE LOVES JEAN"

"Charlie" Bornstein (C) was in the hospital for an operation recently. He collapsed in the shower. The nerves cut by the surgeon may have been the impetus, for a small stroke! "Charlie" is home now,--with therapists, nurses, and the regimen of pills. His voice is clear, and he's "comin' out of it"! He had every loving praise for Jean when I called earlier tonight. [3/6/96]

Later he called my Florence to tell her that "Hap" Paulsen sent him a poem that gave him what he wanted, that we cared for him!

Keep it up! Wish him well!

1802 Ocean Parkway, E-12 Brooklyn, NY

11223 718 645 7679

BE ALL THAT YOU CAN BE

Be all that you can be!"

That's a phrase that bothers me.

Was I all that I could be

In the A-a-a-r-r-m-e-e?

"We will teach you a new skill!"

All I learned was how to kill,

Eat SOS and other swill,

And do things against my will--

Sleep in foxholes in the rain,

Finish the hikes with feet of pain,

Peel every "spud" from the state of "Maine",

Get up at five and don't complain,

Wash and scrub, polish and shine,

Never stepping out of line,

Do everything by army design--

(Not the right way--or even mine).

Weekend passes we could not arrange,

We spent our Sundays on the range.

The name of Blackstone, we did change,

We called it "Tombstone". That's not strange.

Our independence suffered sorrily,

As we all learned that categorically

Questions asked as were done

rhetorically,

By martinets, Oh, so quarrelly!

The Army, after World War II's strife

Returned me to civilian life,

Now, I'm all that I can be,--

If it's okayed by my wife!

"Hap" Paulson (C)

DON AND YOLANA

We'll see them at our reunion! Tough to beat! "Iggy" Pawlowski (A) has not responded to their notes, but came through with a card for the holidays! [Ignatz Pawlowski, 54 Coal St. Glen Lyon, PA 18617]

They asked! "The McIntyres will come to our reunion. Urge the Andy Bogacz family to come!"

Recall that Don won a medal at the SHAEF track meet in the broad jump, Frankfurt, 7/45. It was made a gift to his grandson.

As ever they are very active. Bowling is the latest pleasure for them, and they dream of having their own ranch, and all that goes with one. It would be a gift to their children, for free tours for school kids, and be able to help our native Americans in many ways. In the '70's Don helped build a summer camp for Sioux lads along the Missouri River. He had published and spoke, calling for help for the depressed American Indian children.

Let alone their local library as a source for reading, Don is early awake writing poetry, with many devoted to Yolana and for their grandchildren. Often he is at a local school with its children, exploring so many sources. He sees the whales passing their beaches, looks forward to helping senior citizens at their centre, and enjoying cruising under a fly ball.

COTTONWOOD JOY!

Ed and Maja Hoy (Hq,Rcn) are "makin" it! Ed might need a cornea transplant. They'll make it to Germany 3/25 - 4/10 to visit with Maja's elders. They'll be back for our reunion!

[GOING TO JOIN THEM THERE?]

Ed's cousin who has been into genealogy, came up with info on Ed's grandfather, who left no trace after separation from the family. From 1881-1886 he had been fighting the Apache out of Camp Verde, Arizona. It's a protected state park now "full of relics", eleven miles from where Ed and Maja live!

The coincidence is moving! The Hoys have visited the park many times in the last five

years. "In the past 50 years we migrated from Wisconsin to Texas, to California, to Oregon and finally retired in Northern Arizona not knowing the long sought-for grandfather would eventually be traced to this Indian-fighting post eleven miles from our home!"

They called Rufino Hualde (Hq), Dr. Leon Michaud (Rcn) and George Scruggs (Hq), urging them to "haul their butts" up to our reunion, but they are not in shape to make the trip!

LET'S DROP 'EM OUR BEST WISHES!

Michaud and Fay Hualde and Julia Scruggs
1848 E. Coronado Rd. 2239 W. Earll Dr. P.O. Box 14545
Phoenix, AZ 85006 Phoenix, AZ 85015 Tucson, AZ 85732
602 252 3664 252 2722

Ever the best on your trip, Maja and Ed, with ever better health!

Mary Ziemon Letters [Busbach, Germany]

12-28-1946

Dear Nate,

It is with heartfelt thanks and joy that I received your package a week ago. You must excuse me that I have not written earlier. I have had so little time before Christmas. Sure hope I can make up for it this one time. You just can't believe how much joy it brings to me and my parents. I have received a Christmas gift and Christmas is now modest in Germany. In America you must have had a beautiful Christmas celebration. We are going into a new year and hope it will be a better one. I am tense about about what the year will bring. I'd like to go back to America, but that depends on so much.

The weather here is not so good, always so much rain instead of snow. It is not too cold.

How is (?) doing? I thought he would have written me by this time. He seems to be very busy with his wife. When you write him again, send a batch of my good wishes to him. I've sent you a couple of pictures and hope you'll like them.

I've got to get to work in an hour so I'll head for Aachen and mail this letter there. If I do the letter will be exchanged by fewer hands. You, now, can use air mail, but not we. So, I'll shove off, but my thanks are deeply felt for the package. Sure hope to hear from you soon, again. I remain with my best greeting as,

Mary

Lieber Nathan,

To you and your mother my most heartfelt thanks. Your package brought us a great deal of joy. For all of us it was a pretty Christmas gift. We hope it makes everything good for you. Furthermore we want to hear from you, often. Too, we still speak

often of your visits to us in our cellar room with (?). Hopefully your health continues. Till the next time the deepest greetings to your folks. Frau Ziemons.

11-21-1946

Lieber Nate,

Joyfully I got both your letters, one in English, the other in German. You just can't imagine how happy to learn you have a package on the way to us! Dear Nate, I hope again that the day will come when I can make it up to you. I really enjoyed your letter in German, but you must not address me in that formal way as, "Sie" when we know each other so well. As great friends we can readily use, "Du" when we address each other. I can read your letter quite readily. You make errors, but those involve telling time. I enjoy all your lines, and look for you to write often.

Here in Germany things still are the same. We'll have even less butter next month, a 1/4 lb. per person. Sustenance supplies are very poor. Otherwise pieces of clothing are difficult to come by. Yes, Dear Nate, it'll be a long time before things go on an upswing here. In a year or so I want to get back to America which was my first home. Where one has lived for so long cannot be forgotten.

How are things with you at home? I assume snow has fallen by now, not yet here. I might have forgotten Christmas, so right now I'll wish you a happy Christmas and New Year greetings. That goes for your folks who, unfortunately, I have never met. When you write (?) again, bestow on him and his bride many Christmas and New Year greetings. I'd like very much a picture of (?) and his bride. A snapshot of you as a civilian would be great. Enclosed is a photo of me beside a car owned by the service where I work. I hope you like the little picture? I'll get some taken later and they'll be prettier! For today I'll close and leave you with my best greetings as your good friend. Mary

P.S. I will let you know as soon as I receive your package.

NOT QUITE THE START OF A COURTSHIP!

August 6, 1945

Dear Nate,

-----Remember the song, *Tomorrow Is A Lovely Day?*" Well I do hope that it is, for it's pouring now, and the temperature is 62. However I am nice and comfortable--all curled up in bed. I have a beautiful cold. You know the kind--can't hear, see, breathe, taste, or smell. It was swell in work today--when someone spoke to me, I couldn't hear them!

We read about the searching parties in Germany. [I was transferred to the 106th Inf. on my way home. I was ordered to take a detail to a rail station and check trains rolling west for problem refugees, etc. *Editor*] You certainly did a very clean and thorough job there.

This must be the end of your Switzerland trip. Boy, you certainly are lucky to have been able to receive that furlough.

Yes, Mr. Bearse is quite the neighbor. Since he has stopped working, he has cleaned his domicile, systematically. One day he told me that he found his wife's wedding gown, and that he was going to have it cleaned so it would keep. Also, he said, that he found a beaver hat like the one Lincoln wore, that was his Dad's who wore it at his own wedding. It must have been quite old.

Mr. B. has given away one truckload of old goods, so you better hurry home before there's nothing left to see!

This home front slays me. My father's boss's brother-in-law wants to drive to Canada on the 19th. Dad, of course, advised him against it, one of the reasons being that our car needs a week in the repair shop--Dad wanted to use Jack's for the week. Jack's friend is an insurance man. The latter is an army captain.

Before he was shipped, the guy dragged his Captain into Shreve, Crump and Low's [classy jewelers] for a goodbye present. He asked what he wanted."--well a cigarette case". "Pick one out!" The Captain did just that. The man has a charge [credit privilege], and just signed without looking at the price. When the bill came--wow! Guess how much?

Well I must close now to sneeze! I'll write again, soon.

Love, Florence

P.S. Case cost \$500. Yes, five hundred dollars! Oh, well! F.G.

HARD TO BELIEVE!

Co. "A", Camp Polk, Louisiana March 12, 1942
We practice-drove as a truck convoy, 16 vehicles with 6 men to each 6X6. What a waste! Just before Shreveport we turned back.



Howard Shank and "Senator" Joe Shula (Rcn.)



(3 Rcn.) worked with "C" Co. (Howard Shank) Medic unknown.



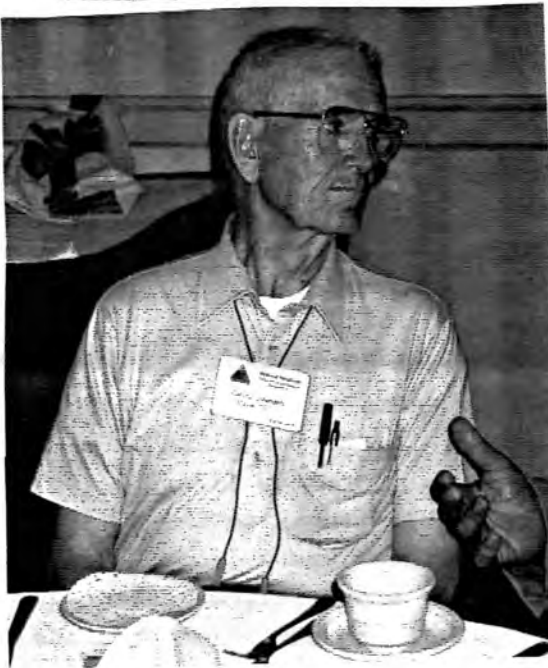
The 703rd T.D. Bn. at 3rd Armored Div. Reunion at Valley Forge, Pa. 1995



Joseph Taberski (C)



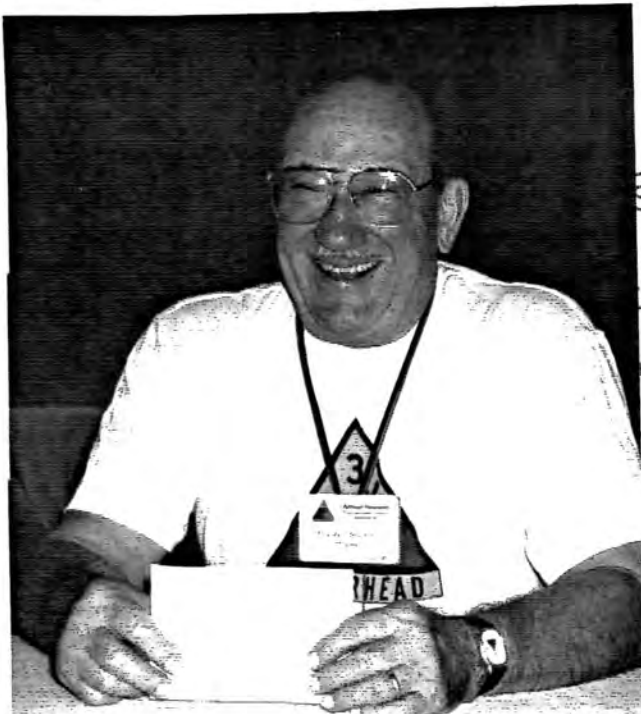
Bill and Kathy Wagener (A)



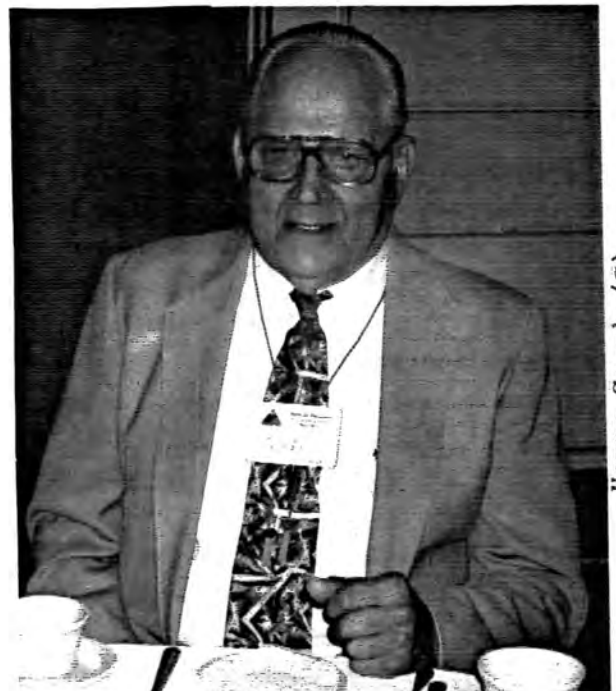
Marlow C. Dearden (Hq.)



Peter and Julie Onopa (Hq.)



Aulay Tompkins (C)



Henry Gosch (C)

The purpose was to give us experience in bouncing around in the trucks, driving on a straight road with a motorcycle escort to make sure we didn't get into trouble in traffic. There was no chance to practice parking or handling the truck when getting through sluggish terrain. If we had pulled into the freightyards at Shreveport and brought back 50 tons of supplies it would have been reasonable. U.S. 171 is a two lane road, and wide enough so that being alert at the wheel was the answer. There are no warning signs of dangerous stretches, and no barriers at railroad crossings. We saw dead dogs and cows occasionally as we went along. We had to stop for wild pigs and cows as they crossed the road many times.

As we were riding along, a thin, sour-faced woman driving a '35 Chevrolet, viciously chewed her stick of gum, and pulled up in back of our truck. Lacking the confidence to pass the rest of the convoy, she pulled up at the side of the road after five minutes. A few minutes later the car blew past us piloted now by an old man apparently headed for a fire. The old lady was content with chewing her "cud"! We all waved as they went by. About 150 yards behind them was a state trooper's car. Three minutes later we passed both cars at the side of the road. The cop was handing out a ticket, and, silly, we laughed for about five minutes.

When I was not driving, my attention turned to the natural landscape. It isn't quite Spring down here. It's savagely beautiful in what was full foliage to me. We passed a landscaped bit of acreage fronting a small body of water. I can imagine how quickly the wild scenery about it would have overcome the frail prettiness within. Beauty, truly, is in strength and savagery.

How wonderful man can be: strong, gentle, civilized, independent, emotional, stable, vicious when necessary, a gentleman if he knows. There's the problem.

In one instance on the convoy jaunt we saw new power lines on medium poles along the

highway. As they cut through wooded places, the cleared trees lay stripped and bare on the ground. It looked as though a keen scythe had hacked a path through the forest, ruining the wildly fierce view.

Women down here would seem to be almost as dizzy about their casual clothes as back home. Red dresses and shoes are a rage, slacks a must, and bare legs are the normal, healthy, comfortable way to avoid mosquito bites. Women here are plump and pretty, or lean and tough.

On returning we had a swell meal of corn beef hash, then mail call. I was surprised to receive a card from Pina Pieroni. Her dark eyes were always a source of Latin pleasure. Mr. Stack sent a chapter from Charles Dickens', *American Notes*, and an essay of Thomas Huxley on inductive reasoning.

Great sleeping, early shower, and chores to do with bedding and clothing to start a new day.

March 13, 1942

We had calisthenics and drill competition as if it meant something. Our flank movements were not good enough, and the first platoon beat us. We drove the trucks to Leesville and back before noon. There was a lecture of sorts after dinner, and a tetanus injection after dinner. I left the battalion area and went down to the Post Exchange #1 to get some snapshots. I was not caught. I, also signed my first payroll.

March 14, 1942

Last Sunday, after I had finished a detail, I bet Carl Johnson that I would get in trouble during the week. I was getting along fine till today. We were having competitive drill, and I concentrated on "doin' it right!" I was in the third file of a three file column as we headed past our tents. I thought I heard, "Count off"! This command is only given under much different circumstances, not when the column is moving! Instead of calling, "As you were!", I assumed that the command was, "Count cadence!" I continued marching and correctly as well, head

up, eyes straight ahead, arms swinging from the shoulders. Suddenly I heard, "Goldberg"! I stopped and heard Sgt. Rugioli, burning with rage call again. "Goldbrick, Where the hell are you going"? I was about fifteen paces in front of three or four men who had mistaken the command as well. I had tried to drill well, and I was "burned". I swung my leg--kicked the dust and spat!

Now it was Sgt. Connell who barked, "Take that smirk off your face!"-- "Yes".

"Do you think you're a wise guy!" He was boiling.-- "No".

"Come out here and drill this platoon. Think it's easy, huh!"

I walked out, not "giving a hang". The platoon came through perfectly for me. Later they all told me that I had done excellently except for calling my right foot my left a couple of times.

Connell didn't stop. "Goldberg or Goldbrick--if I ever catch you grinning again, I'll take care of you!--Some officers have told me of your grinning, and I don't want any more of it. You hear me?"-- "Yes". "No more!" "Yes". "Get back in ranks!" I didn't get K.P., but I had taken a minor "ass-eatin!"

Carl Johnson, in the tent with us, tried to drill the platoon. He has a thin voice, and raising it to be heard made me grin. That's what "teed off" Connell.

We had physical inspection early in the afternoon, and I know that some of the men who the Medics Non-Com charged with being unclean had taken a shower with me early that morning. It was an insult to them no matter how necessary it is to stress that a soldier must do all he can to avoid inviting illness. I can not see keeping them restricted to the company area and escorted to the shower room every night.

We saw three anti-tank films this afternoon. Then there was a 2 1/2 hr. film on how we were to answer questions the enemy would ask if we were captured, how to capture and search a prisoner, and plane identification

Over a beer some of the recruits were belly-aching about restrictions, the cadre training us, and other recruits. I guess three beers and restrictions can make a man feel down on the world. The Sergeants love their stripes, but they are professional soldiers, and not human beings. I guess I and the rest of our "bunch" just can't understand it!

(To Be Continued)

RETURN TO "A" CO.--What Happened?

Coming in with replacements about 4/21/45 were Del Legrant, Harvey Ness, Henry Covey, and Forrest Cook.

Del took shell fragments "back in Busbach", Harvey was hit at Weisweiler inside the Siegfried Line pre-Bulge, "Covey" was bloodied way back at Ranex, and Forrest was evacuated just two weeks before his return. Somehow I associate him with a frostbite debility. Your editor couldn't dive fast enough into a "Jerry" slit trench to escape a shell fragment when Lt. Henderson sent me to fetch Forrest's T.D. on 1/15/45, and the war was over for your editor.

Do any of you recall the incidents in which the above men were evacuated? Let us know when you register for our reunion.

Provided by Hugh Livengood (Rcn)

NOT IN THE BOOK !

Being a Yankee academic, the army, as an everyday experience, has become more necessary than its cadres. The irritation is readily part of a person's adjustment process. Thus most soldiers quietly spend a little time finding out if they have the right estimate using a little grousing.

There were quite a number of men in our battalion who groused loudest of all. They found a home in the army. The discipline was simple, and being in the army, to them, meant that breaking the rules was the way they proved they were true soldiers. The army trained us to fight an enemy. These broadcasters of army discipline fought civilians and other soldiers. They could break army rules to prove their will to fight. Being "broken" in the army was an honor. The army was family. There was the army way, and the right way. They would provide their own way.

below, 4/45, may have been that type of person then, not now! Here is his yarn showing the virtue of breaking the rules.

"Since the Rhine crossing, 1C has been in column with "C" Hq., a rather displeasing job for this platoon of fighting hearts has K.O.'d more tanks than any other platoon in the battalion. They don't believe in medals, but in fighting. Lt. Bugganer typifies the platoon in its "to hell with everything attitude" in its calm in the face of any danger. His satirical smile, and ego-supreme leadership instill the same qualities to his men. Other men contribute to the overall spirit. Fred R. Smith adds an intellectual quietness and aggressive fury in combat. Bill 'Red' Johnson wisecracks out of the side of his mouth. Eruc Q. Dupree has the qualities of gab and friendliness, the large Texas smile. These composites of satirical regard, ego-supreme, 'fire at anything', good humor, intellect and friendliness make of 1C a unit unique in the U.S. Army.

Protecting "C" Hq. was not to their taste. Relief came when "Jerry" AT guns let our leading tank elements through and concentrated on our artillery and lightly armored vehicles. 1C was called up, full speed, raced around the burning vehicles in a "hit me if you can" demonstration, dashed across the enemy's field of fire into position in woods on the flank of the enemy guns. Fred Smith, in a lone TD wanted to do a little hunting. He had his TD driven to a position near the 'shot-up' vehicles, straight in line from where enemy fire had come. A cub plane flew above, directing a Rcn. peep wanting a share of the tank hunt. Smith, riding high in the turret, sighted a white apeck in distant woods so fired at it.

"No", said the Cub pilot, "that isn't the target. Target is--degrees left, and at a much closer range." Then Fred saw at the edge of the woods the barrel of an "88", fired at 500 yds. destroying it, sighted the other gun at 1000 yards, fired and destroyed it.

The reader is probably asking, "Well, what about Lt. Bugganer and section on the flank? Well, what about it?"

You Name It, #2, (Publication of the 703rd TD Bn. 4/21/45.)

COMMENDATIONS: THE BULGE

Even as "The Bulge" remained to be closed, the "brass" recognized the work of the 703rd T.D. Bn. Major General James M. Gavin of the 82nd Airborne Division liked our "cooperation in the solution of various problems developing from the tactical situations in which we were involved. Skillful, soldierly performance of the 703rd T.D. Bn. was particularly gratifying and materially helpful."

Major General Matthew B. Ridgway of the XVIIIth Corps (Airborne), Major General J. Lawton Collins of the VIIth Corps and Major General Maurice Rose of our division, supported Gavin's compliments.

Lieutenant Colonel Wilbur E. Showalter, our C.O., was more specific in his support of the above commendations.

"Especially deserving---are the officers and men of "B" Co., which, as the only armor present in a very large division sector, functioned so capably even by sections and single guns."

Hugh Livengood (Rcn)

LONG LIVE THE QUEEN X

It's June 8, 1944, and all we've learned now is added to thoughts of our men in the beachhead who haven't time, but for survival. We perform army chores on the way to join them.

Time drags so that I'm reminded to tell you who to talk to at home or here if I'm killed,--the Watsons, the Non-Com in W.W.I making a dull evening the brighter, the folks at Minehead, Mrs. Marsh,--her son Norman (who showed me around Eton), Doverhay Down, Porlock, Somerset, England, their father had to remain on duty in Aden away from his family for about seven years!

There were two papers, formal letters I found in my pup tent at noon from General Eisenhower and General Watson, our division commander. What did Watson mean by "interior division"? There was a copy of Army Talks that had been given us a day before the landing on the Cotentin Peninsula, Cherbourg, and Caen. Inch to a mile maps were distributed today to all vehicle commanders, thus where we were to operate, at least to start with, was in their areas. The beachhead proper probably was meant to extend across the peninsula forming a straight front along that of Caen-Bayeux and across the peninsula to Brittany.

Major General Watson visited 9 June. Master Sgt. "Ed" Hoy told us at Personnel that the Germans were holding four armored divisions opposite the area where we were going in to the beachhead, but the order of battle is never a certainty!

Roll call on Sunday morning, 11 June, and I was pretty mad,--back at duty clerk at Bn. Hq. I've pulled this detail twice, and once on a weekend. Getting it again on a weekend is a true "gripe"! As soon as I reached Capt. Beacham's office, he is our battalion adjutant, he had me typing information relative to transient troops in the marshalling area. Everything feels stupidly serene around our tents with the major headache, policing! We have received more small arms ammo for our vehicle today. There will be eight carbine blanks for firing A.T. grenades for each carbine. I like the use of that weapon. When I stand sentinel, I'll have a fragmentation hand grenade in my fist.

We are slowly alerting ourselves, double guard in the motor pool with passes to go to Mere, and officers have to sign out.

It's 13 June! Yesterday our kitchen moved by our tents, and Bn. Hq. moved out across the road. We can pick up stakes, and move very easily when the six hour alert is sprung. Listening to our officers the other day, I felt the intensity as they awaited the news broadcasts. The identification of the 29th Infantry Division, the old national guard from around the Mason-Dixon line with the 803rd T.D. Bn. attached, not confirmed, were in the assault. The truth was coming out concerning the heavy casualties on the beaches. We paid as we expected, and I am ashamed that they have to feed so much "malarkey" that the losses were less than expected. That type of announcement can be taken in more than one way. Personally, I'm feeling a little careful.

I swiped a map of the Bournemouth-Kitteridge area which you will find in these papers. The reason for this action was that in this area there are many memories. --There are no thoughts of desertion, talk of serious dissatisfaction. Everyone seems ready to get on with the job ahead. Even with all the preparation, helping the Graves Registration personnel get ready for their duties, we joke and talk of the future when we can be more trouble to the neighbors who thought the army would do us good! It has been over two years for me, and though I would prefer looking on, we knew we were destined for combat since the beginning. I hope we justify ourselves in doing the job that will help end the action in this theater.

I can look back at the relationship of home, at the adolescent and maturing desire for a girl, of the education I wish to continue, and especially of that wonderful triumvirate,--me, dad, and Mr. Stack. With all that hope, I remain with little despair at the futile wastefulness of war, and its other ridiculous aspects. Come what may, I look for the good work we shall be able to do against German armor. You can't just handle death and not wonder if you can successfully direct it. Didn't most of us feel the same?

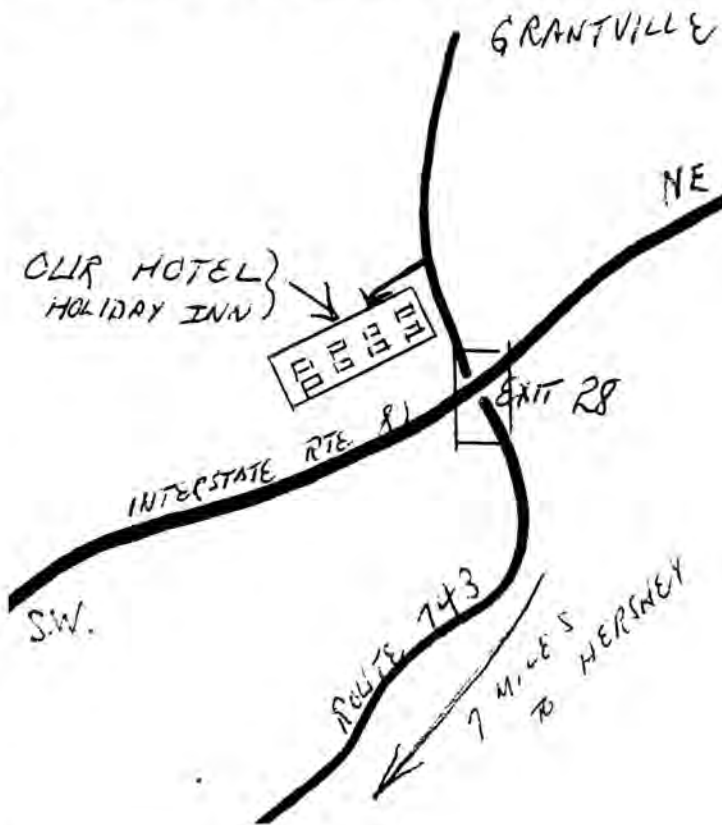
On the map of the Bournemouth area look for Kimmeridge, St. Alban's Head, Corfe Castle, the Coast Guard Lookouts, and that little stream east of St. Alban's Head that is on the extreme left limit of the two anti-tank ranges. My letters have told you of the colorful scenery from the high, long hill in back of the ranges, of our walk in a straight line to Corfe Castle from the range over hedge and fence. Note our route from Wareham to Blandford (Off map), the route which took us to and from the range. It was a beautiful

sight watching the projectiles ricochet out into the sea. Note Bournemouth, a resort and now a military center, a more modern English city.

Our officers slept in Smedmore, #356-995. Our tents formed a circle north of Smedmore Hill. Up top is a radar station where an A.A. post is kept by the outfit using the range. High in the seaside of Swyre Head, #368-988 I wrote letters to you about the wind giving me a headache. There was the sea to the right with the magnificent cliffs of St. Alban's Head, #393-960, and on the left, Encomberm with its wood, #375-985. The right limit of the A.T. range was the tower, #340-993. There are two ranges split by Little Kimmeridge. The direction of fire is along the 36 line. Those Kimmeridge Cliffs fooled me, because they are high and many a "dud" has been thrown on the cliffs. The left range was used by us for small arms fire.

(To Be Continued)

HOLIDAY INN, Grantville, Pennsylvania



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Aulay Tompkins (C)

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