



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



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

Vol. VIII #1 703rd Tank Destroyer Battalion Newsletter March, 1997

### WITH A LITTLE BIT OF GOOD HEALTH!

Last December Bob Schutt surveyed our membership asking them if they intended to go to our reunion in Grand Rapids, Michigan in the spring of 1998. The results were encouraging. Below are listed those who have said that they will come if health and other factors permit.

Please advise Bob Schutt, our president, to whom our membership assigned the preparation of our reunion in Grand Rapids, what you feel will be the best type of event for A.D. 2000. Does it make sense to try have the usual type of gathering? What type of event? Regional? Part of the division reunion? **PLEASE OFFER "BOB" YOUR OPINION!** We'll look for you at the division reunion in Louisville this fall. Don't wait to let "Bob" know your opinions till then. There are decisions to make! **SOUND OFF!**

J.W.+Chris Williamson  
Ernie+Audrey Coloura  
Henry+Florence Gosch  
Elmer+Frances Langbecker  
Phil+Edna Mallabrin  
Pete+Julie Onopa  
"Nap" Paulson  
Aulay+Isabel Tompkins

Matt+Gene Luczynski  
Frank+Marge Miller  
Wate+Florence Goldberg  
Ted+Helen Michalowski  
Don+Yolana McKiernan  
John T. Wojciechowski  
Wilbur+Lucille Showalter  
John+Jennie Czajkowski

Eulow+Helen Minick  
Bob+Ruth Downey  
Rocco+Regina Manthro  
Pete+Sadie O'Neil  
Seaton+Phoebe Perry  
Frank+Sue Walker  
John+Isabel Strabosky  
Don+Martha Belland

Joe+Kathleen Cerrito  
Jack Biddulph  
Leo Sinn  
Ray Twomey  
Oscar Carlson  
Steve Popovitch  
Ed+Maja Hoy  
Claude Ball

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### "HE'D ALREADY SURRENDERED"

Fred Hunt (Hq) came through with some pictures. You'll envy his "park bench" portrait when you see it on p.6. Fred is coming through from bouts with a stroke, then prostate cancer. Georgia and he are most grateful for the notes and calls of support he has been getting. From what was left by his sister, he found some W.W. II souvenirs including a news yarn on General Maurice Rose's death. It's from an April, 1945 local newspaper in Fred and Georgia's bailiwick, Springfield, Missouri.

### NAZIS KILL CAPTIVE U.S. TANK GENERAL

WITH FIRST U.S. ARMY IN GERMANY. April 3, 1945 (UP)--

It was announced today that Maj. Gen'l. Maurice Rose, Denver, Colo., commander of the Third Armored Division, was shot to death by Nazi tankmen while taking off his pistol so as to hand it over to his German captors. Rose's aide, Major Robert

Ballinger, White Plains N.Y., said Rose had already surrendered to the crew of a German Tiger tank when a tankman with a "burp" gun shot him.

Rose was riding south of Paderborn last Saturday [Mar. 3rd] when he was captured. He was trying to reach a portion of the Third Armored force which had been cut off. Rose, one of the outstanding tankmen of the war, led the Third Armored division spearhead through northern France into Belgium, and his unit was the first to breach the Siegfried Line.

Ballinger said the General's jeep followed by a command halftrack, ran into a German tank column. They pulled off the road, and started through a field trying to escape the Nazi tanks when they ran into a German Tiger tank on the edge of the woods. The general and his aide got out of the jeep and stood with their hands overhead in surrender. As Rose was unbuckling his pistol holster, he was shot.

Later, armored units returned to the spot and found the gen

eral's body and the command halftrack. The car was unrifled, indicating that the Nazis were either a green crew or had been frightened away before they had time to search it. Ballinger said "General Rose kept saying over and over, 'I don't understand, I don't understand.' Then we decided the German was telling us to disarm so the general reached down taking his holster over his head, started to toss the gun onto the ground. Just then a Nazi opened up with a Schmeisser machine pistol, and let the general have it through the head."

Ballinger and the jeep driver jumped into the ditch as did the crewmen from the halftrack. All worked their way back to U.S. units.

During the Third's drive against tough resistance through the roughest terrain, Rose was always up in front. His command post usually was his own tank from which he personally directed the spearhead advance of his division. His tank was usually on the move and up in front of the armored vehicles.

The 45 year old officer had assumed command of the Third Armored Division as a brigadier general and was promoted to major general on Sept. 5.

He was a three time winner of the Silver Star medal before D-Day in France. He received the Silver Star during the drive to recapture the Kasserine Pass; received an Oak Leaf Cluster at Bizerte and the Second Cluster during the Sicilian campaign.

Rose was one of the few division commanders to come up from the ranks. He enlisted as a private in 1916 and was wounded in France at St. Mihiel during the First World War. He served with the 89th Division, but also saw service with the 33rd. In 1930 he was transferred to cavalry and in 1939 to armored warfare training.

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Included with the news item was a report of the reaction of Rose's family. His father, Rabbi Samuel Rose, saw religion, his faith, play a role in his son's death.

**'FOR MY SON'S SAKE.....'**

Denver. April 3--(AP)--War Department news of the death of Maj. Gen. Maurice Rose, 45, in action in Germany, left his wife and mother prostrate with grief--and his father Rabbi Samuel Rose, spoke of his son's sacrifice as further evidence of the Jewish people's "love of liberty and freedom for all peoples."

Besides his parents, and a brother, Arnold, his wife and small son live in Denver.

The 89-year-old Rabbi Rose, his voice rising and falling as he sat holding his cane said,

"It is well that since this had to be, it happened in the week of Passover. As Jehovah said, 'When I see the blood, I will pass over you'. He spoke not to the Jews but all peoples, to the Gentiles, to Americans, to Germans, to all peoples. When I see the sacrifice, the blood, I will pass over you.-- And so may Jehovah accept this sacrifice, and see the blood and pass over all peoples for their sins at this Passover time.-- For my son's sake.

The Jewish people have demonstrated their love of liberty and freedom for all peoples since the days of Abraham, Isaac and Joseph, and I am proud that they are still demonstrating it in the wars of the world at this Passover time, in the deeds and death of my son."

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**HOW ABOUT SENDING "DICK" A GOOD WORD?**

Dick Ligatti (C) is under a physician's care! He is having trouble walking, and if you add your encouragement to that of Lydia, it might help his "Doc" ease Dick's difficulty!

Richard and Lydia Ligatti (C) 7590 Dorcas St.  
Philadelphia, PA 19111 (215) 725 1916  
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**A GREAT PAIR**

Aulay and Isabel Tompkins (C) had their "run-in" with hospitals last Fall. Isabel had an emergency operation for a strangulated hernia. "She lost three feet of gangrenous intestine. She's coming along fine!" Let's give that couple our very best wishes.

93 Almond Drive, Hershey, PA 17033 717 533 6659  
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**"IGGY" PAWLOWSKI (3A)**

Iggy's niece, first in a Christmas card, then later in a note to Don McKiernan (3A) reveals that her uncle was in a nursing home. Three strokes caused the loss of use of his right leg and hand. The letter said "Iggy" had another stroke.-- All courage, "Iggy" is holding on to life. The last address we have was:

54 Coal St., Glen Lyon, PA 18617

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**T A P S**

PAUL CLARK (Hq., A.) has been lost to his Edna and the battalion. Alzheimer's Disease and pneumonia combined to still his life. He served as our company and battalion clerk. His dour humor was as Texas as the spirit of his people. We'll certainly miss him, very much so.

924 East Thomas, Sherman, TX 75090. 806 892 8096  
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HELEN PIEPIORA, "Peppys" (A) wife passed on last September. We'll keep contact with their son, PAUL PIEPIORA, 53 Middle St., E. Weymouth, Mass. 02189. Sure hope Jack Moriarty (A) and John Prior (A) are well. Jack kept contact with Helen and "Peppy!"

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THE GOOD WORD FROM "JOHN THE BARBER"

Jennie Czajkowski (B) wrote us Valentine's Day. John had a stay in the hospital. With a change in his medicines, the result,- better health. He'll have to continue to live with the regular intake of oxygen. His breathing is better and he's more comfortable.

They were at Bill and Hazel Crochetière's 50th Wedding Anniversary last November, an all-out, beautiful affair.

A call came from John and Annie Ruth Sellers (B)  
206 Oakcrest Dr.,Wilmington, NC 28403 919 791 3474. ="they sounded good and survived the bad storm last Fall very well!"

Oscar Carlson (B) RR 6, Box 1058, Astoria, OR 97103, 503 458 6900 dropped them a line and a snapshot of his very successful hunting trip. On the back of the snapshot, (See picture page) Carlson wrote, "Oh Happy 85. I got 1 blacktail buck, 166 lbs, and 1 elk, 704 lbs., so I had a happy 85!"

John and Jennie sure love your greetings. They have come through for us. They need us now. Box 91, 43 Sunnyside Ext., Yantic, Connecticut, 06389.

HANG IN, AND BE WELL!

Bea Falk (Hq) and Nate are in Florida for the summer. They are recovering from an accident, driving only for local needs. Bea is now very nervous at the wheel. "I am no fun in the car and drive Nate up the wall with my fears!"

Last August, "--unexpectedly Nate had to undergo a quadruple by-pass! He is doing well". They extended greetings for the New Year, and rejoined our association for 1997.

473 F.D.R. Drive Apt. K 1601      2088 Oak Ridge "U"  
New York, N.Y. 10002      Deerfield Beach, FL 33442  
212 673 8965

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THEY TRULY NEED YOUR VERY BEST WISHES

Ed and Claire McIntyre (A) are in for a long siege as they attempt to get back together. Col. Showalter visited Ed at the facility that is helping him become capable of handling the left side stroke he suffered. Russ Steele (Div.Hq.) sent me Ed's address. Let's send that thoughtful, giving couple our best wishes, our prayers for Ed's recovery so he can go back to Claire. Her health has been far from the best. They truly need each other.

Edward McIntyre c/o Communicare, 625 Probasco St.  
Cincinnati, OH 45220

Bob Schutt (A)

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The latest on the MacIntyres is upbeat. Claire's arm had been broken in two places, but she is mending well. She has been staying at her sister's who has been taking her to visit with Ed. at Communicare. She feels it wont be long before she's behind the wheel. They'll sell their home for simpler quarters if all goes well.

Ed remains unable to handle essential movements around his bed, but is confident he's going to make it! " He's had some notes from our lads.

Everett Stites called your editor with the above information knowing that our encouragement to Ed and Claire will ever gain their gratitude. 2 / 24 / 1997.

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IT HURTS TO REMEMBER!

"CHARLIE" Bornstein (C) 12/25/96

It had been at least three weeks, and I was to call him this morning, but he called me. He was at an acquaintance's garage when he had another little stroke. He spent a short time in the hospital, but is home and feeling better. Jean is fine, out shopping when "Charlie" called.

He called "Downey" recently. Overseas they had warmed each other sleeping closely in their destroyer. "Downey" is in fair shape.

"Charlie" telephoned his pet hate, "Lt. Austin" the other day in Baxter, Tennessee. "He must have been under the bed watch-

ing T.V. Yet he came out to talk to me.--I told him that someday we'd get together, and I could still make a fist!"

"Charlie" recalled two incidents in which "Austin" proved his colors,-- his leaving the destroyer that "Charlie" drove onto the beach (Omaha For White) in Normandy, and his assignment of "Charlie" to the crew that was sent on a mission that he claims "Austin" misdirected resulting in "Charlie's" CAPTURE.

What was new was his description of how he kept a record while standing next to the barbed wire fence at Stalag 6A, in Germany. His pencil was about 3/4" long, the writing pad very small. Every night he kept the pencil under his tongue, and the pad between his legs as he was inspected by his guards.--In order to get "Charlie" off the "kicks" that are emblazoned on his wish list, I asked him to contribute a poem. He soon called back with the lyric he said he wrote at the barbed wire fence.

IMAGINATION

How I wish to fly. The feeling is impossible to describe.  
The body stays. The mind is everywhere  
In the clouds, near the stars. They are somewhere in heaven.  
Your imagination, there are no limits or barriers.  
Just let yourself go, with all the freedom that you possess.  
The wonderment of it all is whatever you wish.  
We live in our own beautiful world.  
No one can reach us because we are in our own kingdom."

As he now read, "Charlie's" voice became a sob. His voice was recalling the fence, the guard tower, the hunger at the Stalag where he was imprisoned. After a few moments his voice became clear. We exchanged good wishes for the new year.

Editor

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CHANGES OF ADDRESS

GORO, Nathan (C),  
212-30 23rd Ave. 2G  
Bay Terrace, NY 11360  
(718) 229 1390

McINTYRE, Edward (A),  
c/o Communicare  
625 Probasco St.  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45220

DUGAN, Haynes W.  
Third Armored Division  
Historian  
610 Marshall St. #918  
Shreveport, LA 71101-3664  
318-222-3721 Office

STRAUB, Leonard (A)  
Telephone # Change  
847 253 0507

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ARMY CHOW

A Ballad

The Tennessee maneuvers  
Were our indoctrination  
To the field rations of the Army,  
No cause for celebration.

The C Rations were really old  
From the Spanish-American War.  
The biscuits could only be broken  
By a hammer or a saw.

In the Louisiana maneuvers,  
Again we were undone,  
The C Rations though newer,  
Were left from World War One.  
No supermarkets in the field,  
Nor corner grocery store.  
If we didn't change our diet soon,  
We'd be too weak to fight a war.

Tarantulas, scorpions and snakes  
Were all around.  
No health stores or diet supplements  
Were anywhere to be found.  
But the good Lord heard us bitching,  
He said, "All right you G.I.s,  
Get ready for a Luau."  
He sent a boar of some good size.

You know when troops are in the field  
They must dispose of their waste.  
We dug a latrine at one end of our site,  
At the other we dug a sump into place,  
A huge pit measuring 6'x 6'x 6'  
Into which mess slops were spilled.  
And as the days passed into weeks  
The sump was gradually filled.

One morning as we lined up for mess,  
We heard an awful grunting row.  
Into that pit a boar had fallen  
And was eating our thrown away chow.  
Two days before we broke up camp  
The boar was killed and gutted  
And roasted slowly over a fire  
Where the drippings flamed and sputtered.

The company enjoyed the roast pork feast  
Except, of course, for the two  
Who had to climb down into the pit  
And lift that boar into view--  
So even today, when I hear, "Luau",  
It is no cause for glee,  
For of the two who went chest deep in slop,  
One of them was me!

"Nap" Paulson (C)

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OVEROPTIMISM EMBARRASSED

From the Kingman, Kansas weekly newspaper  
a relative sent "Bur" an old clipping.

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Mr. and Mrs. W.A. Showalter of Kingman

received a letter this week from their son, Lt. Col. Wilbur Showalter, written in Belgium. Among other things Col. Showalter said:

"The war can't last much longer, though we still have to crack the German line. The end is certain and I hope soon and the price not too high. How these madmen can prolong this war is outrageous, just to save their own black souls regardless of the many lives they lose in doing it. But I think the hardest part is over.--The Belgians are wildly happy though hungry. They beg for cigarettes, chocolate, candy, bread, etc. They will give you an apple or a pear or a flower and then ask for the shirt off your back.--I don't want anything for Christmas except stuff to eat, pancake flour, syrup, baking powder, etc.---- plus a trip home, even a seasick trip."

A later letter to his folks as of September 15, 1944 said that he was just across the border on German soil.

"Lt. Col. W.E. Showalter of Kingman is commander of the 703rd Tank Destroyer Battalion which is mentioned in a special dispatch sent the Leader=Courant from Paris. One of his men, Pvt. Ray Creviston (A) of Wilston Wixconsin, mentioned as being America's foremost tank destroyer ace was in on the "kill" of a platoon that accounted for 20 German vehicles in one action near Mons, Belgium.

More than 150 vehicles, including 32 tanks, have been destroyed by the TD's in Showalter's battalion."

In a note to the editor, "Bur" admitted that he had been embarrassed by his optimism. HE WAS NOT THE ONLY MEMBER OF THE BRASS AND= POLITICAL LEADERSHIP WHO THOUGHT IT WOULD BE EASY GOING FROM THEN ON !! Editor

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### ON GUARD

Pulling guard needed sterner training and ever more concern in the face of the enemy. The battalion and "A" Co. lost Lt. Wissing, Frank Cox, and Louis Ruiz to a German patrol doing what patrols generally try to do, take

prisoners in a search for information. The Third Armored Division column had come a long way in Mid=August as it sought to cut off a major part of the German Normandy force backing out of the Falaise Pocket east of Normandy. Before Raney it was late and CCA coiled due to the coming darkness. "A" Co. was well defended on a key road with an outpost to our rear. Despite the assumed readiness of the men on duty there, a German patrol took not only three of us at that outpost, but a couple of Engineers as well. Later in an attempt to escape our three were K.I.A.'d. We must ask what we learned from that event. When I have asked myself for an answer, I am reminded that training has to be the added corrective, and the danger of the enemy patrol always be kept in mind. Two instances in your editor's experience always come to mind on reflexion of that outpost.

As our first day of truly close hostile action was over in Normandy, the 1st platoon of "A" Co. moved down to a dark gloom in a wood, posting guards from each crew as security on each destroyer. Well into early morning I was awakened when it was my turn on guard, checked my sidearm and began to wonder concerning my responsibility. Where were the other destroyers? Would I be able to know what to do if a German patrol was close by with a grenade to toss into the open turret of the T.D.? Should I change position occasionally? How? My hearing was O.K. "Heinie" was shelling over our heads as we were enjoying our artillery support going the other way! It was a long hour of healthy fear, but how well would I react to alert my sleeping comrades to a present danger? In wondering why my shift was going so slowly, time went, and I went over to wake up my relief. Would the enemy wait till I put my head under the destroyer? I shook the right shoulder, and soon was quite angry as Jim sat up asking me to hit the sack, that he'd be

703rd Road Block-6-



Capt. Marlow C. Dearden (Hq.)



Bill Wagoner (A) Mere, England



Fred Hunt (Hq.) 1945 in Germany



Oscar Carlson (B), Astoria, Oregon 1996

# MICHIGAN

The Wolverine State  
Lake Superior



STATE FLOWER  
APPLE BLOSSOM



STATE BIRD  
ROBIN



STATE TREE  
WHITE PINE



PRESQUE ISLE  
LIGHTHOUSE



HENRY FORD MUSEUM

Michigan has long been an historic crossroads because of its strategic location in the very heart of the Great Lakes Area. The States waterways and trails were favorite travel routes for Indians long before Columbus set foot on American soil. French explorers were the first to enter Michigan about 1620. They established missionary, military and trading posts. Michigan was a prize possession and therefore the scene of many battles involving Indians, French, British and Americans. France surrendered Michigan to the British in 1760-61. The British held the territory until 1796 when Americans took over. Michigan was the 26th state to join the Union in 1837. Michigan comes by the title "Water Wonderland" quite naturally. The State is bordered by four Great Lakes, 3,251 miles of shoreline, the longest fresh water shoreline in the world. There are 11,037 inland lakes in the State plus 36,000 miles of rivers and streams. No point in Michigan is more than 6 miles from a river or lake or 85 miles from one of the Great Lakes.

Adapted by U.S.A. by ROYAL, Copyright, P. E. 1975

getting up shortly! The nerve---that before the enemy he could take his time, leaving the T.D. unguarded for about three minutes as he tied his laces! I continued on guard after another shaking till Jim was on his feet!

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Many days later in column about the time of the Battle of Mortain, the Germans blew a bridge and our column was "held up", blackness of night came and our column never left the road. We had to move out early. Close to dawn the Engineers called us up on foot to dump chunks of concrete from that bridge into the river so as to make a solid crossing base for tanks. But on that night before, with the T.D. on the road between turret-high bankings, we pulled guard on the right side of our T.D. We had had to fight through a town earlier in the day, and scattered Germans were a danger. I was scared aplenty. If I got up on that bare bank I'd have vision for 10-50 ft. My fingers were on the carbine trigger guard. The destroyer occasionally faded from view. I found myself beside an almost vertically, high, long bush edging on what must have been a field. I was sure there must be a German on the other side. Could he hear me? I was imagining what was on his mind. Was he recalling thoughts of the peaceful world of home? Or was he wondering if he ought to ready his try to lob a grenade into the turret. Did he know where I was?

I had to change position to be closer to the inside slope of the banking. Would I see him if he tried to get close enough to chuck an explosive into the T.D.? This moving, assuming the worst, tension deepened. I remained alert, but, again felt so helpless, ---quite concerned about the young enemy soldier across the high hedge. He had a job to do, and in danger!-----Nothing happened as I awoke my relief who grumbled quietly, and was swift to replace me on post.

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But now as we remember the daring Wissing, the spunky Cox and the cocky Ruiz, shouldn't we have pulled guard with more cover for the man on post, more confidence of support, better analysis for the job we had to do on guard?

*Editor*

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#### HARD TO BELIEVE

April 5-May 2, 1942

What happened in these three weeks of the writing of this diary, became what the author decided was a matter of gender relations. He, accompanied by other soldiers, travelled to Port Arthur, Texas, and nearby communities where he clumsily comments on the looseness of the family life for the girl friends of soldiers. However, at public places the behavior of young women was not a display of immorality.

"Nowadays young women do not appreciate gentleness, rather they love virile handling. The young women of Port Arthur jitterbugged with neat pirouettes, and curtsies, a whirl, a rising skirt used gracefully as a neat picture, nothing "hot" intended or shown. No one became drunk. Even the soldiers and a sailor stayed sober!"

There was a reorganisation within the battalion, men reshuffled, the writer sent to radio [CW (Morse) code] school, and the struggle to increase his speed in the reception of the Code. He was glad to be there when the battalion was out on bivouac, and a growing acquaintanceship was strengthened when illness brought to the hospital, Rob, an athletic, All-American lad. While there the young lady whom Rob felt was his steady at home, sent him a note telling him that their romance was over. This appeared to be a common occurrence for service personnel. The hit song in country music was entitled, *No letter today*==!

May 2, 1942

The 7th Armored Division was organized today. We went to Shreveport, La. in a con-



voy, - a thousand of us, 110 miles, 1030 to 1510, called good time. Some of us got to a hotel, made purchases, bought postcards, clothing etc. The evening was spent with some drinking. Downstairs we listened to Everett Hoagland's Orchestra. We were free in conversation. My colleagues got into discussing Jews, and they were quite free in showing the little they knew on the subject. What was pleasant was their effort to understand. What was most evident was their confidence in me. A couple of fellows arranged to share a little time with a woman, the contact made by porters.

May 3, 1942

Up at 0630 with breakfast out of my last dollar, sent out five postcards and ten Mothers Day cards. I walked around town, to Union Station and saw a Kosher restaurant. There's a USO with same architecture as the one in Leesville.

Playing it alone, I went over to Temple Bnai Zion at the corner of Cotton and Common Streets. A Scottish Rite Cathedral was on a diagonal corner. Being a little early I looked around. Across the street was a Louisiana type home with its French and Spanish type architecture, its closed Venetian blinds, its ugly gray-black color, and its 1930 Ford in the driveway.

A black Packard rolled up with four girls in sport clothes and slacks. The girls were about sixteen and the driver about as old. At first I would not enter the temple, but then did. An attractive girl hesitatingly invited me to a meeting of the Temple Juniors. There were about fifteen girls of high school age in the meeting room, "gabby" and carefree! As I entered I heard one youngster utter that the only reason she had come was to help assure her being confirmed (bas mitzvah)!

Rabbi Lefkowitz attired in a natty suit leaned back at his desk with a patronizing, confident smile. His repeated, "Hi Babe" to the girls as they came in was followed by "God Bless You" as they cleared their throats. It sounded as contradictory as it seemed unusual. For the first half hour a discussion of a banquet after confirmation held sway, and the young ladies decided that white dresses would be in good order. Then the young lady who had first greeted me read from a textbook, "Why Jewish Education?" Each point was thrashed out even amidst the gum popping. The Rabbi referred to Kai Fung Foo Jews in China and Ethiopian Jewry, both peoples who needed education to rebuild Jewish world relationships as well as sustain

their own weakening way of life. It was clear that the girls did not think much of the training they were getting in their faith, that they felt forced to go to Hebrew school.

The Rabbi, with the help of some girls, discussed the problem of the Jewish minority and persecution. Education could be a defence against the shrill curses of persecution. Ethical Jewish teaching helped strengthen character. He ranked temple, home, the sabbath, and school in the order of importance for the sustenance of the faith and the welfare of the young.

The old question as to whether Jews were a race or a religion brought me into it. If we were racial, then education was even more a need. Directly questioned by the girls, I found I was in the minority when I felt Jews were members of a race. The Rabbi took the other view, that of a psychologist, opposing some of Hitler's racial arguments. I earned the compliments of the girls, and was invited to return. The Rabbi was friendly with our chaplain. He asked me to give him his regards, and that when he came to Shreveport to bring me along to attend services and meetings.

I wasn't invited to dinner so I went to Cohan's Restaurant (Kosher). When I saw the "negro" waiter I had doubts, but when Mr. Cohan opened the kitchen door and I saw a "black nanny" cook, I felt like throwing the "gefillte fish" (ground and seasoned) at him! ===A kosher restaurant?

It took five hours to get back to camp.

May 4-9, 1942

Great when it rains. Add when the battalion is off on a three day problem, and I'm comfortably busy at Radio School. My poor buddies are getting soaked out on the range! On the 6th they were back at 0500. They were bitten to death by mosquitoes, wet, and sleepless. Some got an hours sleep before Mess call, then a regular police call. "Smithy" ("A" Co. C.O.) had the men assemble at 0735, then double-timed them over to the Post to test their gas masks. Radio School men did that at noon. During the test in which tear gas was used, we had to doff our masks to let us know the eye burn effect of the gas. "Arresting" is the proper qualification for the effect of tear gas.

In the evening I went over to the hospital to visit little Joe Pinto. He recontacted a social disease (the "clap"), and he was pretty unconcerned. The woman who passed it on to him was in the hospital as well, but

Joe said he would not squeal to the Major (?) who repeatedly questioned him. He told me a few yarns relative to other men in the hospital,--disgusting! Many married men had picked up the disease from their wives. Some of those couples were treated in the camp hospital.

While in Shreveport I wrote home asking for \$20. Promptly, I received a check for \$50.

"Smithy" said we'd be on the way to California on 7/5/42. The "gab" among the men lead me to feel we'd end up on a campaign in the Pacific.

There was a K.P. assignment to keep me busy. I was out of there very speedily, and on to Leesville, from where I sent some flowers home, and then on to the U.S.O.

May 10th 1942

(To Be Continued)

## N O R M A N D Y

June 29, 1944

It was a sunny morning. The escort vessel on our right didn't look capable of defending our force awaiting the signal to make for a beach. We saw the Contentin Peninsula (Cherbourg) at 1200, and at 1600 we were about 2.5 m. east of Points de la Perce point on a beach known tactically as "OMAHA". There were more ships along the shore than I had ever seen in my life. Amphibious ducks (2.5 Tons) plowed out to vessels carrying in men and equipment. Nearby a floating dock could only accomodate LCVP's, small landing craft.

A few prisoners and people in business clothes, probably for intelligence services, made their scattered appearance leaving for a trip west. Huge rafts plied between ship and shore unloading vehicles. Old ships had been sunk on a line just off the shore, probably to form a breaker. As we moved closer to shore, we saw hillsides pockmarked with shell holes, and one house had only its walls. Miles before the sight of France we had seen shell cases, ration wrappings, boxes floating on the water, but now there was a C-47 that had pancaked onto the field on top of a hill. Overhead 34 "Bostons" (A-47's) winged toward German positions. A number of P-38's followed. A couple of lads from smaller craft came aboard, enjoying some Vienna sausage with us.

At 1900 we moved in till the bottom gently scraped the shore. At 2330 the tide had

receded enough so that we unloaded. We "prayed" that our waterproofing had been done correctly. Our vehicle went into the water up to the body floor, but she moved right up onto the beach as did all our vehicles.

M.P.'s moved us south in blackout along a one way road. The road cut deeply, arched with trees. We sat with guns loaded, imagining snipers and land mines. Soon we eased off the road, closed up, and removed some waterproofing.

From a meeting reported to us, we learned that we were on our way to Castilly, just what Capt. Cole had told us in map class at Mere. We were attached to the XIX Corps whose goal was the capture of St. Lo. Then we'd rejoin the 3rd Armored to take the heights just beyond the city. That was not easily done, only later,--bloodily, and with heavy losses of the British and our forces.

At the initial stop ground conditions were unsuitable to pitch tents. Thus tarps or sleeping bags served as bed places. In the morning we headed south to a highway, then west through Formigny-Longville. Folks waved, made victory-signs. Some did not smile. We passed tired 9th Air Force ground crews who were working hard to get air fields into suitable condition. There were some partially damaged houses, but most were hardly touched. Roads had not been touched where we passed. Gas dumps, ammo and supply dumps were plentiful. Traffic was heavy but smooth. We passed the evacuating hospitals of the 45th Medics Bn. and the 30th Infantry Div.

We went through ISIGNY, the middle of which had been razed. Artillery and air bombing had made an added mess of the center of the town. Then we turned south on narrow roads, outfits parked off the road all the way. We stopped for a break opposite a replacement outfit. There were troops trained in many specialties. Many men told us they had been there 14 days with no transfers. They hoped they'd get assigned into "decent" outfits. Jim Santino (A) ran into a neighbor of his from Philadelphia,-- a true coincidence. The lad had suffered a shoulder wound in Sicily or Africa while with the 1st Infantry Div. The replacements appeared to have only their weapons and the clothes on their backs.

Part of "B" Co. and all of "C" Co. were not yet located. We were about 12 miles from the front. P-47's. P-51's and "Spitfires" ranged overhead hunting targets of opportunity. We could see the defendor's flak as two fighters dove in ahead.

A bit further we pulled onto a field ending our movement for the day. Camouflage training helped. We watched for booby traps, and might have had a bit too much confidence in the trees for protection.

In the afternoon security sections were instructed to put two men on the back of each T.D. Sandbagging the deck was a new chore. Capt. Cole told us the situation. It was "rugged up there"!

\*\*\*\*\* To Be Continued\*\*\*\*\*

THE HEART OF THE A.R.G.

You will enjoy the letter below sent us by André Deschepper who headed the A.R.G. (Allied Remembrance Group), an association of Belgian gentlemen whose hobby is to put back into shape World War II U.S. Army vehicles, and with them to share in exhibitions in Belgium so as to celebrate Belgium's regard for the effort of the U.S. in helping free them from their German occupiers. We have exchanged much information and symbolic items. They are representing the 703rd T.D. Bn. at the events they attend. Portions of this letter truly lets us know of the friends we have made in Belgium.

Deschepper, André  
153 rue du Louat  
6240 Parciennes, Belgique

27 Janvier 1997

1996 again has been a very busy year for Mariette and me. At the close of 1995 our son and daughter-in-law purchased a holiday camp from her father. Young people mean young ideas. They felt they had to modify things concerning the camping facilities before the season opened, so electricity and the showers had to be redone. All season we shared in helping them manage. Not till the end of the season did we get some rest.

This gave me the opportunity to start reconditioning a 1944 Ford Jeep for my daughter. I have already reconditioned a WILLYS Jeep for my son that I drive when the A.R.G. goes to a celebration. Presently the estimate is \$500 to get the parts to put it back in condition. The vehicle has been dismantled, the frame on four wood blocks. I'm removing the rust and the old paint to make it like new. I hurry because my son wants my help to further improve camping at his venture this February.

Mariette prepared special meals for us for the holidays. We had the children with us. The grandchildren, Emily three, and Andrea 2 1/2 make us very happy. Mariette and I are pretty well. She's 58 and I'm 65. We'll celebrate our 37th wedding anniversary on February 20th.

As of the picture I sent you, we went to Elsenborn Ovifat for skiing last December. There was much snow and a very low temperature. [Where our "A" and "C" Co. proved their metal early in "The Bulge"] It's but 90 minutes from our home. Right now at Charleroi there's much fog and rain, plenty of flu and we had it!

Our association has grown in membership, and it was invited to participate at several official ceremonies. We have received a copy of the 703rd T.D. Bn. flag. It is beautiful. You can be sure

that our president is doing his utmost so that the 703rd T.D. Bn. is honorably represented. We appreciate receiving copies of the Road Block. This helps us know more about what you veterans have endured to liberate us.

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CHRISTMAS

'Tis early morn  
When my poems are born.

I started off the day with a prayer for my relatives, army buddies and other friends.

Then a brisk walk to the beach.  
The California sky was a heavenlu hue,  
Golden sunshine sparkled on the dolphins and whales.  
Whitecaps on the ocean blended with the water so blue.

Wonderful thoughts of our children, grand children, grandchildren, great, grand kids, Boyhood memories of Christmas on my Granma's farm,  
Christmas time in the "Battle of the Bulge" in World War II,  
Taking my axe off my tank destroyer.  
Disregarding my well being by cutting down a Christmas tree for the children of a farm family,  
Scooping up some airplane foil on the snow,  
Decorating the tree with foil, string,  
Christmas cards and G.I. candy,

Au revoir to the Belgian family to continue our fighting.  
Thoughts of going with Christmas gifts with my Y.M.C.A. Jr. Leaders club to the Old Mens' Home, among the very few that went downtown that far to roam.  
Thoughts, too of the Sioux Indian Y.M.C.A.'s in the Dakotas with heavy snow, sub-zero cold, and the rest,  
Hoping my Christmas gifts helped them meet life's tests.  
Current memories of volunteer teaching in the Carlsbad schools, bringing poinsettias and candy to wonderful children who are real jewels.

I have always been filled with love, and had that smile, always willing to go that extra mile, never too busy to help young or old, no matter what they told.  
On this Christmas day I want to reaffirm my helpful ways, hope for the time ahead in the years and days!

Donald McKiernan (3A)

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703rd Road Block-12-

**HAVE YOU PAID YOUR ANNUAL DUES?**

Members who have not paid their dues for 1996 are advised that if you are delinquent for two consecutive years, you will be dropped from among those receiving the Road Block. Let us know if you stop receiving the Road Block and wish renewal. We certainly wish to remain in contact with you!  
**ANNUAL DUES \$20.00 LIFE MEMBERSHIP \$75.00**

Total membership to 2/25/97 -91-  
We have 26 life members, 65 who pay annually.  
26 have paid their dues for 1997. 39 are unpaid for 1997.

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\* Checking Balance as of 7/16/96 \$5015.04\*  
**F O R S A L E**

Tank Destroyer Caps \$7.50, Patches \$3.00  
T.D. Lapel Buttons \$4.00, Bolo Ties \$6.00  
Add postage \$2.50  
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Send checks or cash for membership or items :  
above to Leonard Straub, 207 North Maple St.  
Mt. Prospect, IL 60056 847 253 0507  
\*\*\*\*\*

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