



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



Vol. IV #3 703rd Tank Destroyer Battalion Association Newsletter 9/1993

## PRIDE IN THE 703RD'S SUCCESSES

Remarks prepared by Col. W. E. Showalter (Ret.) for the 703's dinner at Indianapolis, September 3, 1993, but never delivered due to his emergency absence.

Let's go back forty-eight years to 1945 at about this time of year. We were in Darmstadt, Germany. VE Day had occurred in May; our war in Europe was over! Then in August our U.S. Air Force dropped two atomic bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima, the Japanese surrendered, and VJ Day ended World War II. Our 703rd was then deactivated, and we went our several ways, many to "cigarette" camps to await shipping space to return home, others with fewer points to other units on a temporary basis, a few of us to continue on active duty, and some to continue in a National Guard or Reserve status.

Tonight, forty-eight years later let's ask ourselves two questions. What did the 703rd accomplish during its ten months of combat, and how much did the 703rd contribute to success in Europe? Let's look at the factual record. Very shortly after VE Day the 703rd published the facts, a summation of the different kinds of German materiel destroyed. Let me emphasize that these are conservative figures. We made every attempt possible to verify and check the accuracy of every tank, self-propelled gun, or mortar emplacement claimed to be knocked out. If we had included every suspected "kill" plus those we could not verify, these numbers would have been much larger.

The first category includes tanks, Mark VI Tiger, Mark V Panther, Mark IV and Mark III. There were also self-propelled guns on either a tank or halftrack chassis. How many of all these would you guess were knocked out? Let's see your hands,--ten, twenty, thirty, forty? The actual number, believe it or not is eighty-nine! That's almost unbelievable! Fantastic! And these are conservative figures!

The next category includes transport vehicles, halftracks, general purpose vehicles, heavy trucks, and horse-drawn wagons. The total is one hundred twenty! Again, remarkable, and, again, these are conservative figures!

The third category is towed guns, both anti-tank (twenty-two knocked out) and artillery pieces, 105 and 155mm. etc., of which seven were destroyed for a total of twenty nine. Then the list goes on and on including pillboxes, five, mortar emplacements, two, and machine gun nests, six.

The point of all of this is that the 703rd's combat record was a monumental success, and each of you who made it possible should be very, very proud! I certainly am!

Let's explain the reason for the success of our battalion. My answer is primarily because of its members, quality people, dedicated, sincere, as well as brave. I thought so then, and I'm convinced more as I've come to know you better.

What price did we pay for this success? Our casualties are, indeed, the other side of the coin. You will recall that fifty-three of our comrades fell,

Normandy Northern France The Rhineland The Ardennes Central Europe

four officers, and forty-nine enlisted men. Very many more were wounded. We honored them at a special memorial service at Darmstadt.

I have several reactions to those fifty-three who died while on duty. First there are two on the list for inexcusable reasons. One was killed accidentally by another cleaning his .30 caliber machine gun, pulling the trigger assuming incorrectly that the chamber was empty. The second was killed on an icy road in the Ardennes immediately after the Battle of the Bulge. This one happened when one company commander deliberately disobeyed my direct order that not even one vehicle should even wiggle on those icy roads except for absolutely essential supply and command vehicles, and certainly not a recreational vehicle! I mourn for both of these tragic and needless losses.

Another personal reaction deals with Corporal Juno. You may remember that in England we were informed that the new German Mark V Panther tank had a front plate called the glacis plate, so sloping at a very extreme angle that even a direct hit would not penetrate but bounce off. When we were notified of this disturbing news, we discussed how best to handle it. I quickly decided that the tank destroyer crews had to be told the truth. We assembled all the key personnel especially those in gun crews to inform them of this sobering information. We also emphasized, if possible, to aim at the side armor, the tracks, or the junction of the turret and the hull in order to knock out an enemy tank. The gunner could not depend on a hit on that sloping glacis plate.

Not too many weeks later, soon after St. Lo, and near the French village of Ranès, Corporal Juno's T.D. was in the woods on a road block mission when a big Mark V Panther came rumbling around a curve just a few feet away. Corporal Juno blasted it on its glacis plate, and lo and behold, the round penetrated and raised all hell inside the tank. I wish the story ended there, but unfortunately it doesn't. Some of the German crew bailed out, severely wounded or dying, whereupon Corporal Juno got out of his T.D. to help or administer first aid to the Germans. While he did so some of the German ammunition continued to explode, killing Corporal Juno. A real hero but so sad. So, on an overall basis, we have to be saddened by our losses, but I guess we can consider ourselves lucky, and be grateful that our losses were not even greater.

In preparing these remarks, I happened to reflect upon further questions. My reactions to them may interest you:

What was the most difficult time for the 703rd? My answer is the nine months of waiting, --waiting, --waiting for our action to begin. Until it began we could not even guess at when it would end.

What was the saddest time? My answer, the death of Corporal Juno and General Rose whom I admired enormously, a tremendous combat leader.

What was the most fun? The most enjoyable? My answer our ninety mile "speedway" dash north to Paderborn to encircle the Ruhr pocket, and we knew then that the war had to end soon.

What was the strangest, the oddest time? My answer, the pullback into the Harz Mountains immediately after pulling back and out of combat for good. It was where we guarded several manor houses on castle-like estates where Nazi treasures, paintings, and other art works were stored.

When was I most proud of the 703rd? My answer, throughout our action during the Battle of the Bulge, when we could break loose from the Stolberg area more quickly than could the Third Armored, rush to the First Infantry Division ("Big Red One"), and the 82nd Airborne Division (parachute infantry), and then home again when we were reattached to the Third Armored

"Spearhead") for its drive on Houffalize. In every single case, all of those superb outfits were absolutely delighted to have us, and in each experience the 703rd performed smoothly and professionally. I was so proud of you then, and I still am for what the 703rd accomplished. All of you, also, can be very proud of your accomplishments as a part of this great, fighting outfit.

I wish you all the very best.

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INDIANAPOLIS AND OUR REUNION  
WERE MADE FOR EACH OTHER!

Eight hundred comrades, wives and guests of the Third Armored Division Association attended the three day gathering, about the same number as last year. They included forty two from the 703rd Tank Destroyer Battalion Assn. family listed below:

- |                         |                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| <u>HQ. CO.</u>          | <u>A CO.</u>              |
| Bob Green               | Elmer, Francis Langbecker |
| Fred, Georgia Hunt      | Rocco, Regina Mantro      |
|                         | Ed, Claire McIntyre       |
| <u>RCN. CO.</u>         | Don, Yolana McKiernan     |
| Ed, Maja Hoy            | Ted, Helen Michalowski    |
| Everett Stites          | Frank, Marge Miller       |
|                         | Jim Santino               |
| <u>A CO.</u>            | Bob, Lora Schutt          |
| Vic, Florence Borek     | Leonard Straub            |
| Nate, Florence Goldberg | George, Anna Toma         |
| <u>B CO.</u>            | <u>C CO.</u>              |
| Claude Ball             | Hap Paulson               |
| Jim Roberts             | I.B., Inez Wagonseller    |
| Bill, Hazel Crochetiere | Shirley Flakes            |
| John, Jennie Czajkowski |                           |
| Dick, Ruth Langerveld   |                           |
| Linford, Roseann Owen   |                           |

Colonel Showalter sent greetings. His sciatica, and his "medics" kept him away.

Business Meeting 9/3/93  
703rd T. D. Bn. Assn.

Treasury Balance \$2754.49

The Road Block needs your anecdotes, news, photographs, and ideas.

In recent months we have found five "strays"! Soon our search appeals in news papers throughout our country will turn up more. Let us know of a 703rder we might contact who is not showing up for reveille!

We are preparing an updated directory to send to all members.

The gift of Claude Ball (B) in memory of our dead has earned him a life membership.

Do you have a company roster? Please send the Road Block editor a copy.

Leonard Marchewka (C), was taken from us [See Below]. Hap Paulson (C) was chosen to replace him as our chaplain. Later, Hap was elected to the division Board of Governors.

Our battalion reunion is set for May 17-19, 1994, Tuesday-Thursday, in Springfield, Missouri at the Sheraton Inn. You will register at the Sheraton at \$54/day/person, and send a fee of \$25 to Fred Hunt of which \$15 will be for the banquet. The December issue of the Road Block will have all the details including the forms you mail with your checks.

If we occupy 25 rooms we will have a free room for our social and business use.

IT'S TRUE!

We are going to fly, Newark, N.J. to Springfield, Missouri. We compared flight costs through our travel agent. Round trip fare midweek was \$815.00. To stay over Saturday and fly back Sunday, it was \$261.50.

Nate and Florence Goldberg

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703rd Tank Destroyer Battalion Association  
Annual Membership for 1994

Please send \$10 for membership and volunteer \$10 for the quarterly Road Block to

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

When you include a note with your check with news, suggestions and questions, it enhances friendships and strengthens our association.



Business Meeting 9-4-93  
Third Armored Division Assn.

In memory of the role played by our division in liberating prisoners in the Nordhausen Concentration Camp, two Holocaust survivors, Irving and Regina Lee (San Diego) shared our reunion with us, expressing their gratitude for freedom from tyranny and its blessings for them as Americans.

Look to division newsletters in the near future concerning overseas tours to our European theatre of operations.

The organizer of the organization of Vets of the Battle of the Bulge advised the body of the great danger of prostate cancer for men, and that veterans should arrange periodic medical examinations.

Charles Jacobs (Tucson), the new president of the division association, announced that our reunion is set for Phoenix, 10/12-15/94 and at Valley Forge in 1995. It could be in Fort Worth in 1996.

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T A P S

M. Leonard Marchewka, 82, of Lyndhurst, N.J. was taken from us on July 9, 1993. He had been with the American Broadcasting Co. in New York City for ten years till 1977 as head accountant and bookkeeper. "Len" had been a member of the Lyndhurst Board of Adjustment from 1973 to 1977. He was a member of the Holy Name Society and a deacon for eighteen years with St. Michael's Church, Lyndhurst, belonged to the Knights of Columbus, its Color Guard, the Leisure Citizens of Lyndhurst and the National Association of Catholic Chaplains.

As the second platoon leader of "C" Company in our battalion, he had to be evacuated after being wounded in the Normandy Campaign.

Surviving are sisters, Mrs. Irene M. Lenda, Mrs. Cecilia Olszewski, and a brother, Stanley. Below is his letter, 5/3/93, to us.

He could not reach Everett Stites to try help him overcome the despair of Marie's loss, and had been hospitalized several times recently. "---my blood pressure was acting high and low, and disconcerted. I'm coming out of it. I've been told to slow down in all activities, in my 83rd year, and cannot physically walk five or six miles daily visiting the sick. The Doctor is bringing me out of my doldrums, so maybe next year [I'll get to reunions].

By the way, Nat, do you know, or have you heard what happened to the best Sergeant in the 703rd,--Goldman from Chicago? The last time I saw him with a wound in his bicep standing by the road. Later I saw him again, because he had refused to go by ambulance, and he had another wound in the other arm. He was going to take over, because I had a jeep waiting for me. I was later wounded and evacuated. When I returned to the 703rd from a hospital stay, no one seemed to know what happened to Goldman. Have you, perchance, heard anything about this heroic and beautiful man?

In the meantime, my best to all my friends in the 703rd, and all Spearheaders. I love you, each of you. May God Bless You."

Leonard Marchewka

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THERE GOES ONE GREAT GUY!

We have lost Fred Krupnow (Hq), 7201 Merriman, Romulus, MI 48174. He was taken from us this July. "I spent more than three years with Fred, and there wasn't a finer person or Non-Com! Fred Hunt (Hq), Leo Sinn (HQ), Cecil Stagman (HQ) and others greatly admired him." We are sure Marjorie will appreciate hearing from his comrades. We shall all miss Fred at our reunions.

Seaton M. Perry (Hq)  
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BEST WISHES TO EVERYONE FROM  
THE DEARDENS

Lois and Marlow C. Dearden (Hq.) have moved so that their son and daughter-in-law can help Marlow take better care of Lois who has had three years of serious illness.

Please note the change in your directories. Marlow feels, "I am the only person in Utah that is or could be a member of the association." Let's encourage a loving couple with every hope for better health.

R.R. #2 Box 403  
Brattleboro VT, 05301

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A 'TOP KICK' IN OUR SIGHTS!

We've corraled Edward Hoy (Hq,Rcn)  
4627 Vista Drive  
Cottonwood, AZ 86326

This former First Sergeant, if we can get him to tell us some yarns, will do a good deal to reawake the past, make our history more meaningful. He phoned Rufino Hualde

(Rcn) and Leon Michaud (Rcn) in Phoenix. "Ed" and Maja came to Indianapolis adding to the pleasures of our reunion.

He retired as an Industrial Engineer in '82 due to a serious heart affliction, then hobby-farmed on the North Umpqua River River "where I could fish for salmon and steelhead right from my pasture." Three years ago his health would not allow him to keep farming so he retired to Arizona.

Here's a coincidence for you! "Ed" brought home Maja, a "war bride". Just when we were found by Ed and Maja, we learned that Frances, the wife of Louis Guerra (Rcn) looks back to Mere, Wiltshire as her home and realm of courtship.

Thus Fred Hunt's bloodhound, John Strahosky (C) [See below] and a newspaper article, treed two war brides within days of each other. Isn't that something?

Hap Paulson (A,C), will have to change his tune that there was a gold mine in wedding rings tossed off the gangway at Le Havre as the G.I.'s embarked for home. "Ed", "Lou" and Joe Cerrito (B) kept theirs.

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Please Correct Address

Betty Barreca (Rcn-C)  
1667 6th St.  
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11223

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POUR JOHN D. STRAHOSKY (C)  
A DOUBLESHOT OF CANADIAN CLUB!

7-8-93

Hi I.B.,

This is my first correspondence with you. I got to know Bob Schutt (A) pretty well over the years.

Spent a good portion of July 4th in Monongahela where they had boat races, three performing bands and a big fireworks display at the aquatorium. Since I received your newsletter this past Monday, my patriotism is still fired up from the "Fourth Parade", and your pitch for new members. I got on the phone yesterday and made a couple of calls.

I located Lou Guerra (Rcn), who never heard of a 703rd or 3rd Armored reunion. He was so happy to hear it. He immediately agreed to join and go to the reunion in Indianapolis. I was surprised to find him right in town. Lou married Frances while we were in Mere, Wiltshire. They went back several times to visit. He walked up the road

to our camp and only saw the rusted remains of a few huts.

After talking to him I found that Joseph Sholtis who was the manager of our Fisher Big Wheel Dept. Store was in the 703rd Hq. Co. He always spoke to me as if he knew me from way back. I never remembered his name, and forgot where we had met. The store closed three years ago, but he may still be in the area. I should be able to locate a few more 703rd members. I'll make some calls next week.

Here's payment of membership for:  
Louis and Frances Guerra (Rcn.-Hq.)  
1003 Shady Avenue  
Charleroi, PA 15022  
412 483 7314

Last year I found Dale Hamilton. He joined and came to the Reading reunion. I'll see you in Indy. Maybe I'll pick up a few more members before then--Sincerely yours,

John D. Strahosky (C)  
46 Locust Avenue  
Charleroi, PA 15022

P.S. Try to send Lou a copy of the latest 703rd Road Block. B E E N D O N E !

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*Say Hello To All The  
Boys For Me*

Walt Mesunas (A) checked in with I.B. the other day. He misses us all these last few years. "One year it was an accident,--the next, two big weddings--, this year Theodora's heart couldn't carry its freight, and she needed to be in the hospital." She is now getting home care from her T.D. commander nurse. "I hope we make it next year."

SO DO WE, WALT! Every blessing from all of us for both you and Theodora!

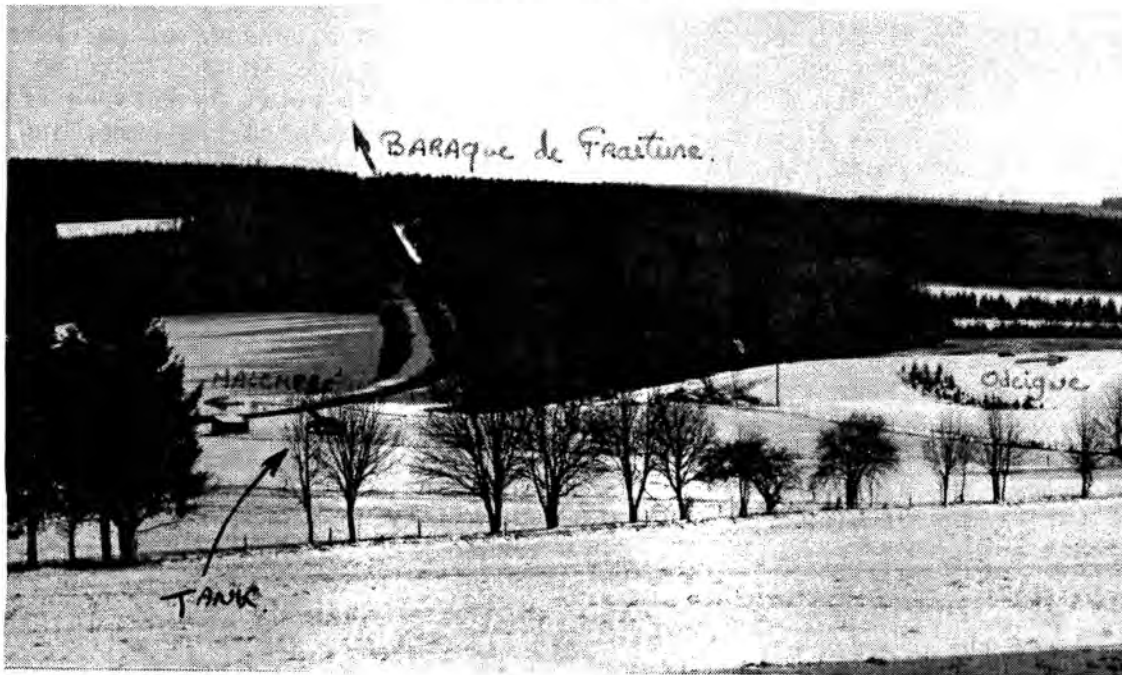
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GREETINGS FROM JOE AND KATHLEEN CERRITO (B)

Along Lake Erie, southwest of Buffalo, and very active in veteran's affairs, live a couple concerned about us all, Joe and Kathleen Cerrito (B). We have snapshots sent us by John Czajkowski some time ago. There's Joe with "B" Co. associates, Manny Finger, Judson, Garcia, Bill Crochetiere, Tom Laughing, and John. Claude Ball wrote Joe, and let's hope they can get together next Spring. Joe wont make it to "Indy" in September, but will try be with us at our reunion in the Ozarks next May. If Claude and Joe could get

703rd Road Block -6-

Was This Destroyer Ours?



On the drive to Houffalize, 1-6-45. Location of destroyed T.D., 1993  
(Rogister)



The 2C T.D. (?) marked 3A 70(?) at road junction above.  
(Rogister)





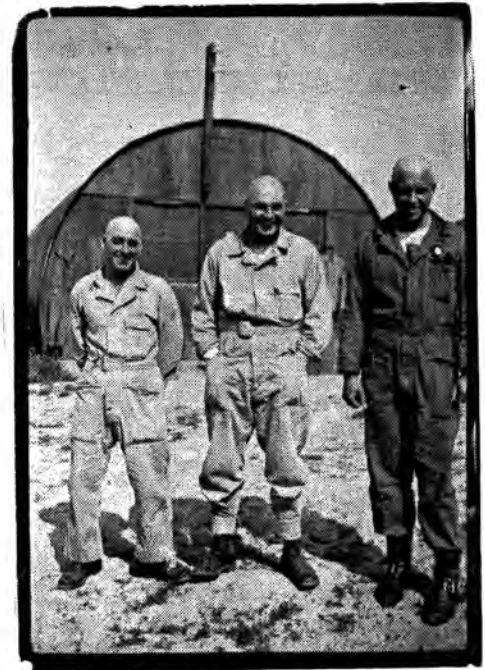
(?), Finger, Crochetière  
Cerrito, Czajkowski (B)



Bill and Hazel Crochetière (B)



Cerrito, Judson, (?)  
Garcia, Finger (B)



Larry Bretschneider  
Jim Santino,  
Clarence Gann (A)



John and Jennie Czajkowski (B)

"The Barber" and Crochetiére into a "gabfest" as to what happened near Grand Halleux and Trois Ponts, they might recall what other T.D.'s of "B" Co. were doing as they held back Peiper's forces trying to cross the Salm and Ambléve Rivers. [12/21-3/44 in The Bulge]. Peiper escaped capture, but was later tried for his role in the massacre of Yanks at Malmédy.

Joe wrote, "I do get to see Ken Newman and Don Seelow once in a while. Ken was in a bad accident some time ago and his health is not the best. He doesn't want to go anywhere or do anything. I tried to get him to come to Reading, Pa. No luck!"

KEN NEWMAN now lives at 52 Lexington Court, Lockport, N.Y. 14094, and DON SEELOW is still at 105 Old Niagara Rd., same city and P.O. Maybe Joe will try Don again because back in September, 1992, that P.O. noted that Don was not at that address. Lockport is just east of Buffalo, 70 miles from Joe and Kathleen's bailiwick, 47 Douglas St., Fredonia, N.Y. 14063 ( ) 679 1901.

How about a toast from our "B" Co. contingent for a swell couple, the Cerritos?

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"ERNIE - WHY DIDN'T YOU COME?"

We met a half of a century ago  
In O.C.S. at Fort Knox,  
Ernie [Silva (B)], the quiet Hawaiian  
And the loud mouth from New York blocks.  
We hit it off from the outset.  
They say that opposites attract.  
We were both assigned to the 3rd A.D.,  
To the 703rd in fact.  
In the desert, Ernie had his car.  
We'd spend our weekends in L.A.  
Or Riverside or Palm Springs.  
We were both young and gay.  
From the desert we went to Pickett  
Where the training hours were long,  
No weekends off, no revelling,  
And still our bonds grew strong.  
Then to the Gap, near home at last  
I spent my weekends there  
While Ernie went to Philly  
And found his soul mate there.  
I was the best man at his wedding,  
I thought, "He wants a touch of class".  
Then he told me why he'd picked me--  
I knew when to stand or kneel at mass.  
Through England, France, and Germany  
We managed to stay friends.

Once after the war we met in Philly.  
That was about the end.

Some Christmas cards for a year or two  
Then I heard from him no more  
Until I heard he was in Florida  
How it made my spirits soar.

I wrote to him, and he wrote back,  
There was much I wanted to know--  
What happened to him over the years?  
How did his family grow?

He said he'd come to a reunion  
And we could rehash all that occurred,  
But the reunion came-He was a no-show,  
And that was the last I heard.

In one of the issues of "Road Block"  
They wrote that Ernie had passed on,  
And the answers to all my questions,  
Like him, they too are gone.

I'd have loved to see you once more  
Old friend, and rehash old affairs.  
It was not to be-

God Grant Eternal Rest

You are always in my prayers.

Hap Paulson (A,C)

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CONGRATULATIONS

Lift the glass for Dr. Leon A. Michaud (Rcn) who is a practicing chiropractic physician and author. The inspiration for his recently published novel came from Matthew 27:31-34, Mark 15:21, and Luke: 23-26 referring to the "black" man, Simon of Cyrene, who was pressed into service helping Jesus carry his Cross up that long hill to Golgotha. Michaud, Leon A. D.C., F.I.C.C., Simon Was Black, N.Y.: Vantage Press Inc. 1993.

Leon and Helen live at 1848 E. Coronado Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85015. We hope to see them both at the 703rd Reunion in the Ozarks in the Spring of 1994,

That Michaud wrote a novel, raises our anticipation that he would tell us some "yarns" about our battalion. Please come through for us, Leon and Helen.

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AN EARLY LETTER HOME

Co. A 703rd Tank Destroyer Bn.  
Camp Polk, Louisiana, 3-7-42

Dear Ruth and Mother,

Here goes with some answers to your questions. I do not think that I will be permitted to come home over Passover. The



U.S. is at war, and no time can be spent on furloughs. However I shall request a furlough if it is possible to get it.

I was permitted to get around the rest of the camp yesterday. I turned in some film to be developed, and the pics won't be ready until next Saturday, March 14. If they come out well I will send them home. I will have them make some more to send to the relatives and friends who have so kindly written me. I got seven letters today. A man in Boston who owed me some money wrote me a letter telling me that he would send me what he owed me. Cousin Rose and Uncle Jake sent nice letters besides your own.

I have not been able to see any movies, but if a good one is shown at the post I won't miss it. I am writing you a letter every day if I can, and I will not fail if it is humanly possible to write.

Dear Ruth, your card showed you were worried. Honestly, I feel fine. I weighed myself yesterday, and I have gained a couple of pounds. Please do not worry. Take care of yourself, and you will never have to worry about me. If anything serious happens to you, let the Red Cross know, then I can get home.

Ruth, the joke you sent me had the boys in the tent rolling.--I received the food and it was swell. I can use all you can send.

A toilet kit contains soap, shaving gear, toothbrush, etc. Send the zipper case alone if you can get one. I don't need the other stuff. The case is so handy. The hangers and towels are a necessity.

I could not go to a dance because I did something wrong. So tomorrow, Sunday,--the heels,--I have to clean the latrine, and do other such odd jobs!

Every rookie must get a G.I. government-issue haircut for God knows why!

Earl's working nine hours a day, now, and is tired. Cy Chase is in Georgia. He says he is among the ten smartest students in his class. Please give my kindest regards to Miss Welsh, the Bearses, and don't forget the Haroutunians.

Today we competitively marched. I made a couple of good catches in softball. All the other fellows went away for the evening. I stayed home in my tent to write. Tell Pa that everything is okay! Don't send air mail because it only saves one day.

I remain a young man who knows he has the finest sister, mother, and father in the world.  
"Natey"

### LONG LIVE THE QUEEN!

In Indianapolis we were reminded that the date of that reunion was the same as the day we shipped out of New York.

It was Thursday, the sixteenth of September, 1943, and during the night the U.S. transport, the "Shawnee", docked at Avonmouth, west of Bristol. The three battalions aboard prepared to debark. Some men were able to enjoy the luxury of a cold water shower before dawn. It was much later that they would leave the ship. They were far from the action yet they were to be in blackout and to practice war zone security. Nevertheless they knew the day had come when an invasion of the continent appeared likely.

A British Major General greeted the battalion. A band played. Our men tossed pennies to children. The adults were more interested in sweets, smokes, a "pack of LUCKIES" to a blonde in a tar's uniform. Overhead barrage balloons floated over the piers filled with shipping. Not till 4:50 PM did we debark, load the trains, then move out at 0600 for a four hour trip via Bristol, Bath to Gillingham. It was twenty eight men to a truck and seven miles in what was pretty but darkening countryside along the way to camp sites at Mere, Wiltshire.

Mere, Wilts is a village in the south of England. Since there was a war, and that the whole of the 3rd Armored Division was within a 25 mile radius of us, it was logical to describe their area as part of the Salisbury Plain, the training ground for allied armored forces. The battalion was camped in naturally formed horseshoe shaped hills called White Sheet Castle Camp. The Nissen huts of "A" Co. were backed by a hill about 100' high. In another horseshoe area, the natural landform made it an ideal small arms range for the battalion. The officers were billeted in the village. The enlisted men were 3/4 mile north of the village and very shortly after the troops had their cash converted to pounds and shillings, they went off to the pubs and socializing. Of course the regular warnings were given them to uphold the honor of the army.

The men were fortunate to be able to begin socializing in their own language, though they were to learn later on the continent how to express themselves without knowing the "lingo". It was a new environment for them, the "honey buckets", the women of

the British Land Army, and the truth of the matter that there was a war and they had to train, but for what? Col. Prentice E. Yeomans approach was standard. The soldier must take care of himself, his gear, vehicles, and police the area. It seemed quite extreme when after reveille and "chow" the whole company experienced the joy of pulling up the grass as a gesture of proper policing. The thinking men asked why ruin a naturally camouflaged area,--after all we were at war and with German bombers to consider! That type of mowing was soon dropped.

Somehow there were relieving incidents. After one midnight the sleep of the men in their Nissan hut was interrupted by "Pat" Scanlon (A), an officer's batman, gently awakening each of us. Coming from town to visit with his "buddies" and passing the back of the kitchen tent, he had to bring a gift so he readily rescued a tray of cherry pie. There was enough for all of us. The next morning "Chief" Egnor, the mess sergeant demanded to know who the culprit was,--so silly! "Pat" could also supply you with an officer's tie or even a shirt if you needed it. He'd borrow it! Once there was in the mail a package from some "Mom" with socks wrapped around a medicine bottle filled with "the juice of the grain". It quickly went the rounds. John Cox (A) spilled a bit. Soberly he put a match to it, admired the true blue flame, commiserating,--"That's real whiskey!" "Pat" was recommended for a furlough later to visit his folks in Ireland, so near by, but such furloughs to a neutral nation could not be allowed.

To Be Continued

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FROM A LETTER TO A FRIEND

October 8, 1944

Claude Ball (B)

--We were held up by strong rear guard action before Huy. At a road junction in Fleron, Belgium, outside of Liege, the mother of a little girl cooked hot meals for two of my T.D. crews. I gave her the box of candy that I received from you that day. The girl and her mother made me clean up before dinner and wouldn't let me loose till next morning.

At that junction one of my T.D. .50 cal. machine guns ended the military careers of one Major General Heinrichs, commander of the German 89th Infantry Division, and his Lt.

Col. aide, the driver and the Corporal of his late model Opel staff car. The General was killed outright as was the Lt. Col. The other two were seriously wounded, but will probably pull through." [ At the reunion Dick Langerveld (B) and Linford Owen (B) showed us a picture of the vehicle, and officers.]

Not in the 10/44 letter, but in comments in Ball's introductory notes he wrote, "Then on the following Sunday morning, a lone motorcycle rider casually rode toward our road block. I signalled for our gunner to hold fire in anticipation of the possibly following enemy column. There was none. At my signal the rider came close and dismounted. It was a German 2nd Lt. with a map in his hand. He said in surprisingly good English, 'You Americans don't fight fair! You are not supposed to be here. He was humble enough when he viewed the riddled staff car, and gave me his map. He carried no [side] arms. I turned the map over to Col. Lovelady's C.P. I do not recall what happened to the light motorcycle."

In another excerpt from this 1944 letter to a friend, Ball gives no essential background information.

"While one of my T.D.'s was being fired upon from well concealed enemy Mark IV tanks, the Sergeant boarded the destroyer and elbowed his way through the battered crew to get the gun firing. It was no use. He moved the wounded to a [more] comforting place in the turret [?]. Two were killed, two wounded, One T.D. disabled. Thunderbolts (P 47) got the Mark IV the next day-but good.----"

In the battalion After Action Report, Summary of Operations, 1-15-45,--"one T.D. of 1B was reported hit by three rounds of enemy A.T. and burned while supporting T.F. Yeomans, but was able to destroy one Mark IV before it was hit.---1B reported one enlisted man killed by direct H.E. fire."

Was it French that was killed? Is this the incident referred to by Ball?

Does the above remind you of what happened? It will help if you let us know.

Surely Bill Crochetière (B) and John Czajkowski (B) will fill us in on what happened!

Could French have been in a crew with Dick Langerveld (B) and Linford Owen (B). "Speak up", gentlemen,--d e t a i l s ?



THANK YOU, HENRI REGISTER!

We appreciated the letter of 6-1-93 from Henri Register, the Belgian historian, who had helped us recreate the part played by "B" Co. early in The Bulge and with further exchanges of information. We met Henri and his lovely wife in Omaha at the Third Armored Division Reunion last Fall.

In his letter Henri referred to the diary of I.B. Wagonseller (B,C) Road Block, III, 4, 12/1992, p.4 "1-21-45". I.B. had "said goodbye to the nice people at Regné, to Madame Crasson, and her child, whose husband has been a German prisoner five years". A Regné native, Joseph Gavroye, helped Henri find Mr. and Mrs. Crasson at Salmchateaux and he sent along pictures of the Crassons and their home that we have relayed to I.B. and Inez. All of us want to share a bit in the friendship that will be renewed.

Further in the letter Henri refers to the same Road Block, p. 3 when I.B. on 1-6-45 wrote, "We went up through Manhay, by destroyed enemy and our tanks, T.D.'s burnt, to 2C positions".-----

The 703rd had rejoined the Third Armored Division (VIIth Corps, Collins) for the drive to cut off what was left of the German forces in "The Bulge". The attack had begun 1-3-45 moving S.E. from the Grandmenil, Manhay, Lierneux areas, the final objective a crossroads on the way to Houffalize.

On 1-5-45, Task Force Hogan, with 2C attached, had attacked S.E. down the main highway from Manhay aimed at the crossroads beyond Belle Hai. It met strong, dug-in infantry and anti-tank positions. On 1-6-45, moving forward against moderate opposition, its infantry was sent ahead, because felled trees blocked the path of armor. [Spearhead in the West, pp. 230-1]. In the Summary of Operations of the 703rd for that day 2C reported the destruction and burning of one of its T.D.'s as of antitank fire and with five W.I.A. Next day a 2C T.D. was damaged by mortar fire.

I.B. continued in his diary, "----- Schaefer's T.D., burning, had been hit by roadblock A.T. fire. Teates, Pulizzi, Houk, and Combetti were wounded, burnt, evacuated, Schaefer missing. We were lucky not to be fired upon. All these vehicles in column had been abandoned by their crews.---In cover of darkness crews recovered T.D.'s and withdrew to positions near Manhay."

Henri and another friend found and sent us a photo of a T.D. destroyed south of Manhay. Its markings were 3A 70(?) (See p.6). Henri would like to know if that T.D. was the one I.B. claimed as of the 703rd.

We were not confident in our first reply to Register. Still trying to help, he sent two pictures of the crossroad S.E. of Manhay marking where the burned T.D. had been found. (See the clearest on p.6)

Hap Paulson, who led 2C, tells of the event differently. "Schaefer's crew included Reid, Glod, Teodoro, Steinhart or Tavares. Their T.D. was hit, damaging its sprocket at Dom Bütgenbach (12/19-23/44), but not after that. When I.B. came up to our platoon, the burnt destroyer was that of Molitoris. Jim Clawson drove, with Ayala, Weldon (?), Hummel (?) and Tony Pulizzi (A, Rcn) on back, in the crew. Tony was their only casualty."

Hap did not recognize the crew named by I.B. "Schaefer wasn't missing, and the tanks were not abandoned.---Our vehicles were stencilled, [for example] 3A 703TD C23."

I.B. and Hap only agree that a 2C T.D. was hit, and Pulizzi was wounded. Hap may be remembering the T.D. hit by mortar fire the next day.

I can tell Register that the destroyer was ours, and explain why I can tell him little more.

Editor

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WHAT THE TAPE RECORDER PICKED UP IN INDIANAPOLIS!

What Kind of Book?

Hap, thinking back on Molitoris' T.D. tank being hit on the road somewhere S.E. of Manhay, told us that the crew was ordered to abandon the vehicle. They did, but one of the crew climbed back to collect parts of a book. As the T.D. moved in column the crew had been tearing out portions of a book for each man to read. When one man finished his part he handed it on! The T.D. was useless, but not the book!

Mining a Water Hole

Ed Hoy (Rcn,Hq) and John Erwin (Hq) were assigned by Capt. S.S. Smith (Hq) to find where the Division Water Point was located.



movement in combat left a serious need for such information, and quickly. The men had to find division supply, but soon came uncertainty as to where they were as they drove along, and certainty they shouldn't be there when their jeep drew rifle fire. Winding roads helped them escape that threat, but they were lost.

They had time in their wandering to worry about having failed in their mission, and their C.O.'s anger! Toward evening they dipped into a small valley with a small, very pretty village, took a chance to ask questions, and ended up with a feast, and a great overnight at the home of a grateful citizen.

It was their third day away when they reported to their C.O. who had been ready to list them as M.I.A.'s. "Where's the Division Water Point", he trumpeted, his pipe waving threateningly. The men explained their running into the enemy, and being lost. They never mentioned they had had their own watering hole in a neat little, valley village.

MORE IN THE NEXT ISSUE FROM THE RECORDER.

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