



703rd Road Block



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

Vol. V #3 703rd Tank Destroyer Battalion Association Newsletter 9/1994

**IT'S UP TO YOU!
READ! - THINK! - AND -
ANSWER! - NOW - -**

To: Frank and Marge Miller
P.O. Box 131, Hurley, NY 12443
914 338 5818

85 members of our association are paying for the 200+ Road Blocks mailed each issue. Not counting those mailed to organizations and individuals helping us, and to family members of those men who have passed on, 90 are sent to men who served in our battalion, but who have not joined our association, nor do we hear from them! The association must have some vital information from these men:

- a. In what company did you serve?
- b. Your corrected address if needed.
- c. Your telephone number.

The financial security of our association is at risk. Respond with this information within 30 days directly by phone or mail to Frank Miller, our president, so that you will continue to receive our quarterly newsletter.

Within those same 30 days Frank and Marge must hear from all those who ever served in the battalion so as to help the executive board make critical decisions based on the majority opinion of the membership:

- (1) Do we wish the 703rd Association up and running? Yes___ No___
- (2) Do we want to have another reunion in 2 years? Yes___ No___
- (3) Do we want to meet as the 703rd, separately? Yes___ No___
- (4) Do we want to meet only at the division reunion, considering adding another day there for our own meeting. Yes___ No___

YOUR MONEY

Donations (Gifts) 1992-1994	779.29
Balance June, 1992	1469.46.
BALANCE July, 1994	3082.45
Annual Cost, 1993, <u>Road Block</u>	1616.80
Membership 1994	- 90 -
Voluntary Payments for <u>R.B.</u> 1994	- 85.5 -

SEE YOU IN PHOENIX, October 12-16, 1994	
Call 602 840 0398 For Information.	

703rd Tank Destroyer Battalion Association Annual Membership for 1994

Please send \$20 for membership and the quarterly newsletter to:
Florence C. Goldberg, 86 New England Ave. #50
Summit, NJ 07901

HAVE YOU JOINED FOR 1994?

GREAT PRAISE IS DUE

There's only one phrase that can come close to expressing what Fred Hunt (Hq) and his team deserve for the effort and results they poured into our reunion in the Ozarks,

"It was **FANTASTIC!**"

Frank Miller (A)

MINI-REUNION, OZARKS STYLE

Nearly 2 years in the planning, our bian-annual reunion in Springfield, Missouri, May 17-19, 1994 had the added pleasure of a tour bus side-trip to Branson to attend the Andy Williams Show. Its success was measured by the attendance of 86 folks including 16 "first-timers"! Special kudos go to the Reunion Committee, Merle Goodrich, I.B. Wagon seller and Len Straub for their "enthusiastic" efforts!

Our good friends Leroy and Jean Hannemann, and Russ and Marge Steele were present, and are always welcome at 703rd activities.

Col. W.E. Showalter made a brief visit, and spoke. He privately met with everyone for a few moments leading to poignant moments of remembrance.----- *WHERE DOES THE BATTALION ASSOCIATION GO FROM HERE*, try to have our own reunion in 2 years, or have the association meet as an extension of the reunion of the division?

A final observation. If you have a desire to locate an old buddy, you can do it if you are willing to go to the trouble. One word of warning, however. You will be subjected to incoherent letters and phone calls from the confused, even from those who will insist that they, too, served in Patton's Third Army! You will also discover that the Grim Reaper often got there before you. Despite this, I encourage everyone who has an old friend out there,--go find him!

The newly elected President, Frank Miller (A), has assumed his responsibilities.

See everyone in Phoenix.

Fred S. Hunt (Hq) President

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Ralph and Helen Steinhart (A) have moved to be closer to their son who practices medicine in Navaho country.

8555 S. Lewis Avenue 10D Tulsa, OK 74137

T A P S

C. GEORGE PIEPIORA (A)

Your editor, when in Boston occasionally telephoned "Peppy", Jack Moriarty (2A) and John Prior (1A). Last Friday, 6/24, Jack had heard that "Mac", his platoon leader and his wife, Claire, were ill, and sent along his best wishes. John had his own tour with the "Docs", but he had eleven grandchildren to ease his recovery. I told them of the fine reunion we enjoyed in Springfield, Missouri.

I couldn't get "Peppy" till next evening

and it was Helen that told me the bad news. "Peppy's" heart had given way and he died late Friday. His last many months were filled with arthritic suffering.

Cazimir George Piepiora, a fine soldier, rode "bike" and never lost sight of helping his buddies. Helen would appreciate our continuing to be to her what we meant to "Peppy"!

118 Summer Street
Weymouth, Mass. 02188
617 335 7591

Helen later had a note on her card of appreciation for your cards.

"George's arthritis was painful and limited his activity, but it was breathing that was most difficult. He was on oxygen, 24 hours, since April 28th what with pulmonary hypertension and the threatening of heart failure. On Wednesday, George was watering the garden and ran out of oxygen, could not hook up a full tank and passed out,--heart attack. He was revived by the E.M.T.'s and taken to the hospital. He was doing well on oxygen, heart medication and medication for arthritis. George was very weak but still had his wonderful humor. Friday night before midnight I received a call from the Doctor that George suffered another heart attack, and could not be revived. It was unexpected,--a shock to us. George enjoyed the reunions. All of us will miss him. He was a good man. We were married 47 years."

He left 3 sons, 2 daughters, 11 grandchildren, 2 great-grandchildren and 2 brothers. Editor

FRANK WOOLNER (A)

The Chief of All Chiefs made him hand in his fishing pole and license on the eleventh of August. The many aches over the years ended with pulmonary collapse. "Out-of-Doors" was his nickname. He was a pre-war cross country bicycling champion of New England, author of articles for both newspaper and sportsman magazines till the very end. Frank

was a major writer of our division history, *Spearhead In The West*. For our outfit, some of what he experienced appeared in the Road Block.

His loping stride was meant for reconnaissance duties with "A" Co., or assigned by division headquarters to prowl up front, getting into the action for publicity "yarns".

His long bout with illnesses kept him from our reunions. We knew him as a true comrade, all you could ask of a tank destroyer!

Leslie Woolner (Daughter)
P.O. Box 62 92 Green Street
Shrewsbury, MA 01545

SARA J. GOODIN

Wife of John D. Goodin (32nd A.R.) former president of our division association, who is a fine friend of our battalion. Sara passed on while sleeping, June 13, 1994, after suffering three years with a heart problem. She was a navy veteran of W.W. II, taught in college, and was a leader in many veteran and community service organizations.

1300 Virginia St.
Johnson City, TN 37604

THE TABERSKI BLUES

Joe (C) sure misses Violitte! He splits the year between 60 Sweet Sue Dr., W. Melbourne, FL 32904 and Rte. 2 Gloversville, NY 12078, and he's looking forward getting to a reunion, soon.

Thoughts From Breinig 10/44

While mothers read of Patton's glory
Big Wray fought on till death.
We rushed on, still are rushing
But we're not forgetting Burgess,
Richards, Rand, Big Wray, Ross, Voghel,
Mims Johnson.
And others we left by the roadside.
One who missed the swift kiss
From a Belgian Miss,
The friendship of a beautiful people.

Someday when wars are over, Mrs. Wray,
When I have a home by the sea
Or somewhere,
I'll tell the full story of your son,
Big Wray,

Who died in Normandy fighting with the 703.
I.B. Wagon seller (B,C)

GIVE 'EM A B O O S T!

Haynes W. Dugan Leroy C. Hanneman
Division Historian Editor Div. Newsletter
660 Elmwood P.O. Box 61743
Shreveport, LA 71104 Phoenix, AZ 85082

Haynes wife remains very ill, and Leroy has recently been discharged from the hospital, and back on the job.

"B I G L O U---"

Gather 'round children, I've a story to tell,
Of a hard-drinkin' Captain named Lou Capelle.
He was tall and broad, that son-of-a-gun,
Man his size came six to a ton.
We'd open a bottle - He'd put it to his lip,
And slug down half a bottle - that was his
"sip".

Then a little club soda-which he spit out
real quick.

Grimacing, he shouted - "That stuff makes
you sick!"

A roué, a debaucher, Bacchanalian was he,
But he never got sick, 'til we pulled out
to sea.

Crossing the channel on a huge LST
Too nervous (or scared) there was no sleep
for me.

Up to the card game in the mess hall, I did
go,

The ship's cook sold us sandwiches and a big
pot of "Joe".

Big Lou--wolfed them down, and said,"These
are great.

What kind of jelly are you using there,
Mate?"

"They're made of tomatoes," the mess boy
replied.

Quick as a wink, Big Lou--hastened outside.
All he'd eaten for weeks he barfed over
the rail.
He threw everything up down to his toe nails.
And when he was done, his upchucking
complete,
The water level of the Channel had risen two
feet! Harold Paulson (C)

PARDON ME!

It was Jim Robert's platoon, 2B, not 2C
that Gosch visited, and with Pogue marched
those prisoners. See "Tracking", Road Block,
V, 2, 6/1994, 10. Editor

GREAT KNOWING YOU ARE AROUND!

"I have not much to write about, but to
say, "Hello" to Leonard Straub. He is about
the only one who would know who I am, and the
association I had with the rest of the mem-
bers of the 703rd. (I'm) just an unknown
soldier, proud to do what I could for my
country." Stan Dymek (Medics)
6450 Penrod, Detroit, MI 48228

A JOY TO BE WITH!

Joe and Kathleen Cerrito (B), 47 Douglas
St., Fredonia, NY 14063, enjoyed the Spring-
field, MO reunion, and extend their regards
to the "old gang"! They brought a model of an
M-36 T.D. made from a kit. Many admired it
for authenticity and asked where they could
get the kit. Joe and Kathleen mailed us the
information. Send \$15.00 plus 7% sales tax,
\$1.05 to: The Hobby Shop
224 West Main St.
Fredonia, NY 14063

DO YOU RECOGNIZE THIS T.D. CREW?

"Nate,---Betty Jacques, an American visiting
grandparents at Route De Mons, Belgium, on
the way to Charleroi, took this picture,
9/6/44. The Germans had over run the area,

forcing her to stay. When "liberated" a T.D.
crew stopped there, and were overwhelmed by
the joyous villagers. Betty took them to meet
her grandmother and cousins in the picture.
The officer, top left, helped Betty write a
letter to her folks in the USA, putting it in
a letter of his own to his mother. This was
the only way to let her folks know she was
still alive till she got back to the states
in 1946.

She's in my church. When talking to her
she learned I was going to a T.D. reunion.
She almost went "bananas" with joy. She
showed me the photo which she cherishes. I
gave her a T.D. patch, and later one of our
String Tie Emblems. You would think I had
given her a million dollars.

I'm asking if this was one of our crews.
If it isn't, but the photo is in the R.B.,
maybe the copies you send to the other T.D.
associations will raise some interest."

Mrs. John Laitsch

Southside Drive, Oneonta, NY 13820
*Imagine the relief Betty and her Mother
felt when she got that letter!*



Bob Downey (C)

OUR WISSING WAVE

Everett Stites recently visited the sister
of Jack Wissing (A). She was very happy to
receive what we have and know about her
brother. She has already called "Red" Long,
the only survivor of the incident in which
her brother, Louis Ruiz, Frank Cox, of "A"
Co., and Long's noncom of the 23rd Engineer
Bn., were shot. (See pp. 8-9)

She visited Jack's grave years ago in Brittany. During World War II she served as a Wave, and later as Postmistress in Haworth, N.J., from where Bob Harriott (2A) (KIA) hailed.

Barbara W. Shaw
65 E. Rutherford Lane
Lavalette, NJ 08735
908 793 1174

PRESENTATION

The Mohave Desert had fascinated me long after the 703rd left it in 1942. Maja and I returned to it in 1958. There were very few visible remains of our campsite, mostly the eroding sandy roads that had separated the organizational units. There were some old coins where the gamblers had their fun by the motor pool, but I did find bit of "B" Co., authentic and well preserved.

"With proper, deserved formality, I wish to present to a member of that company who was then with us, this most practical, material symbol of our wide-ranging maneuvers that I scooped from the desert. "I.B." will unwrap it, and read the appropriate poem."

Ode To The Historic 703 T.D. Latrines

There were many man-made features
That graced our desert scene,
But none so badly needed
As the company latrine.

A simple trench with straddle planks,
Walled-in by a canvas screen
With wide appeal - at certain times-
Stood the company latrine.

It served yet another purpose
When filled in, and less its screen,
The S I G N above marked history
And for years was plainly seen.
What history? You well may ask!
What nugget can we glean?

'Twas the departure date of the 703rd
Proclaimed over the old latrine. 10/8/42

Ed Hoy (Hq) at the Ozark Reunion.

HAPPENED TO ADMIRE HIM!

There's a picture of Ray Descoteaux (A,C) in the Road Block, V,1,3/94,7, "short in height, long on smiles, and fast on hikes." We lost him to "C" Co. in England. I learned that he could outspeed the rest of Co. "A" in a race over the last mile of a full pack hike at sweaty Camp Polk. Ray showed up in a bat-talion report on personnel, and citations for 9/1944 sent me by Claude Ball (B).

"Pfc. Raymond V. Descoteaux---, awarded the Silver Star Medal for gallantry in action in France on 8/10/44 [Ranes-Fromental]. When his C.O. learned that one of his T.D.'s had received direct A.T. fire into one of its tracks rendering it immobile, Descoteaux accompanied him to the location of the vehicle. Normal evacuation of the vehicle was impossible, and rather than allow the enemy to possibly totally destroy it, Descoteaux assisted in the repair of the track in spite of the incessant mortar, artillery, and small arms fire. In the process of repair, each time Descoteaux raised above a squatting position, the enemy responded with a hail of small arms fire. His courage and determination in assisting in the repair of the vehicle, thereby allowing it to return to action reflects the highest of credit upon himself and the armed forces."

[Cited for Silver Star Medals sharing in the same action, were Lt. Henry F. Gosch, Freddie Kinman, and Florian Lavitsky] *Editor*

NICE GOIN', BOB AND LORA!

The Schutts (A) visiting in Rhode Island a week after our reunion in The Ozarks,--made a few phone calls, and had a happy luncheon with: Jim Roberts (B)
Ernie and Audrey Caloura (C)
John and Jennie Czajkowski (B)
Bill and Delores Gaynor (67th F.A.)
"Tippy" and Anne Giovino (C)

*Are you keeping in touch with comrades?
Help 'em out! Get 'em to join us?*



Steve Popovich (C) Joe Mitch (C)



Frank Bresnick (C)



Lora Schutt (A) Bob Downey (C)



Maja Hoy (Rcn,Hq)



Tom Ordile (A)



John Cox (A)



Art McKeever (Hq) Seaton Perry (Hq) Bob Green (Hq)



Joe Cerrito (B)



Harvey Ness (A) Ted Michalowski (A) Elmer Langbecker (A)



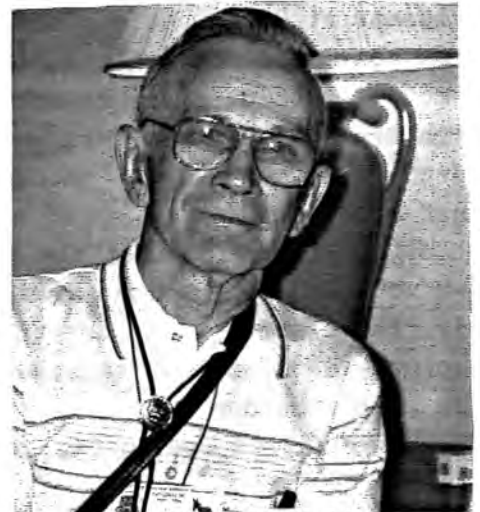
Al Miller (A)



Matt, Genevieve Luczynski (A)



Sue, Frank Walker (A)



Victor Borek (A)

Goldberg's Diary 8/14/1944

In the morning we awoke, started breakfast and washed. Suddenly a Heinie Peep breezed by and was machine-gunned on top of a slope. A few minutes later at our rear a light, self-propelled AT gun opened up on us as well as mortar fire striking Barbalinardo's rear deck. Then MG fire zipped at us. Mayette, Barbalinardo's gunner ducked under a tree. The MG fire struck again. 2 rds. got Dick Moore sidewise in the belly. We had some Nazi POW's. The enemy fire had killed one of their own. They cried like hell and we motioned them into a mortar crater. Another round set fire to a medium tank behind us. Another round broke Mayette's leg. Steinhart and I pulled him close to our vehicle. Steiny, Barbalinardo and another man took shrapnel,-- not serious. Our aid man, Twomey did a fine job on Mayette whose leg was a sight. By this time O'Connor's and Trombley's guns, had KO'd the German AT weapon. We set up a defense to our rear, security on the flanks. 3C moved across the road under smoke and we sweated.

That night CCB moved in. A German patrol captured Wissing, Ruiz and Cox. All 3 were killed later. An Engineer who escaped told us that Lt. Wissing learned that their German captors were about to shoot them, and he urged them to make a break. The loss was not told us till morning. The engineer who escaped, recently subscribed to the division newsletter, then wrote them new information on the incident for its recent issues.

He related that five men were taken prisoner at Ranesh. He did not know the three from the 703rd. He "pulled a road block" (lay a movable string of mines across the road) with his Sgt. Groff,-- was resting when captured. A German bullet "through the hedge just missed me."

He does mention that the Germans had their own wounded, an American vehicle, and probably, their officer, in desperation facing capture, decided that keeping prisoners was too much a burden.

"They killed Sgt. Groff. I and the

officer [Wissing] ran and jumped through the hedge, but I heard later they found him dead. They were shooting at the far end of the ditch when the officer called me to run. **HE WAS A VERY BRAVE MAN."**

ELLSWORTH R. LONG (A+E Co. 23rd Engineers)
511 Valley Rd., Lancaster, PA, 17601.

FRANK MILLER (A) RECALLS THE CAPTURE
OF WISSING, COX AND RUIZ BEFORE RANES

"I wrote to Ellsworth Long (23rd Eng)-- told him what I know about Wissing et al. I can recall every inch of where it happened.

I put out the security at that outpost. Short 6 men, I borrowed Ruiz and Cox from Hq. Platoon. They had had no experience, but Wissing said he'd stay with them. Ruiz and Cox were in a shed against a farm house. Liston and Schachter were in the pig pen. Rocco and Arrington were at the back of the spring house. I checked the 3 posts every hour up to 4 A.M. or thereabout.

Wissing and Woolner were sitting on the steps of the first house. No one had had even a nap for 48 hours. Wissing told Woolner and me to get some sleep. Woolner went back to the CP and his jeep. I went back around the 3 houses to that driveway. Then I went to the pig pen which was the center of 'my beat'. Schachter was awake- Liston asleep. I crawled in with Liston and conked out. Wissing went with Ruiz and Cox.

At daybreak Schachter kicked me and said, 'They've got, Wissing!' I came up,--grabbed Liston's Springfield.--a Kraut with a Schmeisser was shoving Liston through the hedge. I got a bead on the Kraut--squeezed the trigger and got a click--that's all! I piled out--ran over to the hedge, and there was no one in sight. I reported to Cole (CO of A), got Woolner and we took off in the right direction. All we found was that we took 14 Krauts prisoner out of a barn--took them back to the CP--Cole got mad--we found Hoffman and took off again--found another batch of

Krauts, I think 23, and brought them back. Maybe 2 hours later Long came in exhausted--feet bleeding, lots of scrapes and scratches--pretty incoherent, too! I hardly got to say anything to him as we got in a lot of artillery, tank fire, and mortar. That's it!" _____ Frank Miller (A)

TAKING A LACING WHILE FREEZING!

Claude Ball (B) has sent us loads of material to help us recreate the past. He had gone to Wash. D.C., and to more archives at the University of Illinois for documents. Just the other day we received, among many after action reports of CCB of the 3rd Armored, some that were dated, January, 1945.

To close off the Bulge the division was ordered to attack the first week of that month. There would be some tough fighting including casualties in our battalion.

By noon of the 15th, Task Force Stallings (2nd Bn. 33rd Armd Regt. including among other units 1B, 703rd) faced the desperate defence of the enemy, forcing the task force to withdraw to where the attack had begun.

"Only 2 TD's and 17 infantrymen could be considered as effective", that is fit to fight. Relief came with Task Force Richardson (3rd Bn. 32nd Armd. Regt. including among other units 2A, Ferchaud, 703rd).

At the same time, noon of the 15th, Task Force McGeorge had attacked nearby STERPIGNY. The force included the 1st Bn. 33rd Armd. Regt. including among other units 2B, Roberts, 703rd). Its infantry got into the village, but the force was surrounded. Sterpigny then took precedence over Cherain. During early morning of the 16th relief forces were in position, and the attack was renewed at 0615. By nightfall most of the town was in our hands. Both TF commanders were wounded in the fighting and were replaced by Wellborn and Lovelady.

The Summary of Operations of our battalion for 1/13/94 tells us that German artillery had killed Bill French (1B), and 2B had

knocked out an AT gun. The Summary reported next day that 1B, in the attack on Baclain north of Cherain, destroyed 2 Mk. V tanks. To their left, 1C and 2C were in action at Mont Le Ban on the way to Vaux. They would swing a bit to the East while 1A would join Task Force Yeomans charging slightly West, and ahead towards Sommeraine.

On 1/15/45, the summary stated that a TD of 1B in support of the Task Force Yeomans, took 3 AT rounds and burned after wrecking a Mk. IV. There was a report of another 1B death via artillery fire. Might he have been Bill Eggleston (B)? 2B destroyed 2 Assault Guns on Mk.IV chassis between Cherain and Baclain.

Orders from Div. Hq. now set plans for mop ups and further action even as the preparations for the final assault on Sterpigny were prepared in the dark of morning. On 1/16/45 Lovelady took command of battered Task Force McGeorge returning it with 2B to join CCA "to reorganize, maintenance, and rehabilitation."

There was no rest for "C Co. 2C fired 63 rounds at 3 tanks and an AT Gun. 1 Mk IV was wrecked, 1 TD damaged by artillery. 3C, shooting from positions on high ground, claimed as prizes a Mk IV and 2 Mk V's.

Claude Ball (B)

Again we thank Claude for helping us get a clearer picture of what happened. Can you add to it? Don't you wonder if the crews in those 2 TD's (1B) knew what a bashing the tanks and doughfeet had suffered that they were supporting?

Editor

LONG LIVE THE QUEEN, V

"Playin' ball" was very much a part of many of our men's lives. At Camp Polk, Don Mckiernan had no ball but an orange to toss back and forth during a break in basic training. Col. Yeomans and General Gillem came by and asked why the orange! When Don explained there was no equipment, the officers were surprised, shortly seeing to getting some.

One incident in the battalion occurred in England that was an example of baseball being part of what could have been uglier than it turned out. One of Bill Mauldin's best cartoons is of three unshaven G.I.'s, Willy and Joe relaxing on a corner and a clean shaven G.I. passes them, fists clenched! Joe says to Willy, "That ain't no combat man. He's lookin' for a fight." The Non-com in the supply room of "C" Co. was that type. Let Charlie Bornstein (C) tell this incident of ignorance looking to prove its toughness.

"We were in Mere, England for many months living with their miserable climate of rain and fog. One of the pleasures we had was baseball,--weather permitting--, on Saturday afternoons. On one of those rare days I got to the supply room very early so that I was the first in line. When the Supply Sergeant opened the door, I saw baseball bats and gloves lined up on the counter. I asked him for a left-handed fielder's glove. He said, 'We are all out of them.' They were there in front of me, so I said, 'I can see them on the counter!' He said, 'Get out!' I hung around and he gave the next man in line a left-handed fielder's glove. I went up to him and said, 'Sergeant, you said you didn't have any.' He barked, 'I don't have any for --!' The guys on line heard him and that's all I had to hear. I quickly grabbed a bat and swung it at his head. I climbed over the counter and the Sergeant took off running out the back door with me running after him swinging the bat. I chased him up Castle Hill and all around the officers' quarters. I had five witnesses at my Summary Court Martial, and a few weeks later the Sergeant was transferred to another outfit. Two weeks after that we had a medal ceremony and I received my 'Good Conduct' medal!"

Various aspects of what battle experience had taught in North Africa, Italy and the Russian front became part of our training. Working as if we were specialized teams (anti-aircraft defense, demolitions, etc.), was part of the effort. Platoons were busy

enough so that men who were detailed away from the battalion would not be missed. The battalion was preparing the men to be able to assume various roles in combat. The training was to see that the battalion had the "know how" to meet the dangers ahead. For a machine gunner in a security section to be an assistant company clerk, a "radio" man, be on an artillery plotting team, or to fill the role of every man in a T.D., would not be unusual. Certainly finding leaders from within the battalion was a constant goal.

The Command Post Exercises (CPX) were to prepare officers for the coordination of tactical movement in the field. Officers represented units or task forces, often using drivers and vehicles from units other than their own. A few men of the 703rd "got the call" to spend a frigid night or two on the Salisbury Plain, acting as if their vehicle and the Major from another outfit in the 3rd Armored Division were a flanking task force practicing movement of that force in relation to circumstances occasioned by conditions of battle.

Performance with the 3" gun was stressed. Firings were on ranges near Bournemouth, Minehead, Tilshead, and Kimmeridge, the targets racing along the edge of cliffs, spent rounds ricocheting into the sea. On one occasion at Kimmeridge during "C" Co.'s stint, there was the occasional "short round" and the risky business of getting rid of it. There were small arms competitions near the camp, road marches, some in cadence for visiting "wheels", or conditioning, night reconnaissance, or as escaped prisoners (overnight "pneumonia tests"), getting back to our outfits, all of which were felt as busy work. There were visiting officers who came to advise the officers and non-coms to strengthen or modify training as of TD outfits learnings already in battle.

Psychologically, an army training bulletin dealing with enemy "booby" traps, upset the reader. The murderous trickery of our enemies was intimidating. The enemy did not play by

the rules! Truly, it was enough to either stop or start a soldier on a whiskey binge. As far as lectures were concerned, conservation of fuel seemed the topic most used.

Early in December what had been learned of combat for the armored forces in N. Africa, Sicily and Italy meant that specialties and appropriate ranks the men had had for months were suddenly changed. There was a new Table of Organization, irksome to those facing demotion or shifted to unliked assignments or transferred.

February began at Sutton Veny with the loading and unloading of vehicles in the darkness on simulated landing craft built by division engineers. Night signalling was troubling. Infantry training on combat courses, but without live ammunition, did not appear effective enough. Security sections were supplied with haversacks and pack carriers to replace musette bags. Division G-2 came to teach how to interrogate prisoners, also showing a training film on a new T.D., the M-70 (?) with a 76mm. gun, a Wright Cyclone gas engine, "Christy" suspension, five large bogies, four rollers, steel track and half the weight of the M-10. The battalion would have to wait till just before "The Bulge" to become the first on the continent to get a T.D. with a 90mm. gun.

Editor

HARD TO BELIEVE

Camp Polk, Louisiana
February 25, 1942

"G.I. haircuts, today! Each of us had to fork over \$.35! It made the 130 of us sad who traipsed about 2 miles to 3 camp barbershops at the Post Exchange. We had to hang around from 0900 till 1300 before they were through with us. Some of the barbers were thoughtful, trying to make what was G.I. half decent looking. The one I had was mad at us for some reason. He shaved many close to the top of their skull, but it was near the end of the day, he was tired, and he took it easy on me!

February 26, 1942

We trained on machine guns yesterday afternoon, and it was a gas mask drill on a back, dirt road this morning, --3 miles out.

The terrain, its natural sultriness, gave us color. In our New England, we might see the start of buds on trees right about now, a hint of yellow on willows above some morning snow. We also saw on that dirt road the poverty of many people, the hovels of unpainted boards covered with tarpaper to protect them a bit from the rain. Those people should come to our mess hall and take the overflow of food. One good meal, and they would feel indebted to you for a month. There was a little barefooted boy standing at attention when we passed. The strength in the tall straight firs was part of the backbone of the lad. If I were around in the summertime wouldn't I love to to crawl down the scrub lined banking of a creek, and sit looking at the slow moving muddy water, letting the shade of overhanging trees provide some comfort. I can appreciate why the Spaniards and French loved Louisiana after getting the feel of its natural gems.

February 27, 1942

Plenty of calisthenics, --help warm you up on a cold morning. Plenty of drill and "cussin'" by our drillmasters. We received a yellow hypodermic injection today, cleaned the machine guns, and had extra practice with their tripods. We are staying on restriction because we are not SALUTING enough! Surely that excuse is used to prove that obedience and respect in the service does not have to be justified! One of our men in "A" Co. had all his hair cut off yesterday, and he will have to be on special detail for the next two Sundays.

"B" Co. put on a show in the Mess Hall. Their guitar and mandolin player did quite well. Their skit was effective, plenty of laughs, and we had a good time! Lights were out at 2100 hours. That meant we'd get 9.5 hours of sleep till wakeup time. Thus after the show I went up to the day room

where large wooden tables are our desks. The radio blared away. There is a ping pong table and today they put in a pool table. I wrote till 2230, then went to the latrine. Someone had stolen the light bulb, and we had to sit in the darkness and the dampness, with a similar chill in our Nissen huts as we got ready to hit the sack. Editor

In Fond Memory

"Norbert Papineau became my driver after McLeary left me for Paulson, and Ferris was killed at Butgenbach. Papineau was at home with the Belgique, the mademoiselle. His 'Qu'est-ce dit, Mademoiselle?', always brought a joyous smile from the lady. He was a joy to be with, quick to smile and be friendly. He was killed while I was on furlough to England to visit my brother who had been wounded." [2-26-45, artillery fire on platoon CP, Berrendorf] I.B. Wagonseller (C)

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