



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



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

Vol. X #3 703rd Tank Destroyer Battalion Newsletter, September, 1999

### THANK YOU, EVERETT.

We, the executive board members, on behalf of all 703rd members, wish to extend our gratitude to Everett Stites for his efforts in producing the ROAD BLOCK these past ten years.

### WHY WEREN'T YOU THERE?

It was a fine time to be in Columbus, Ohio, for the Third Armored Division Reunion late in September. We want to tell you about it. Give us a call, or drop us a line.

- Wilbur Showalter and Lucille, 1360-40 Black Forest Dr., Dayton, Ohio, 45449. 513 859 0546
- Marlow C. Dearden, 207 Akley Rd., Brattleboro, VT. 05301 802 257 7326.
- Everett Stites and Doris Hussey (Seattle) 581 Forest Dr., River Vale, NJ, 07675. 201 664 9639
- Harold Paulson, 17 Private Rd., Yaphank, NY. 11980, 631 924 8566, 124 36th Ave. N. 205E, St. Petersburg, FL. 33704 727 823 8236
- "Hap" was the speaker at the banquet and "sure wowved 'em"!
- Claude Ball with daughter and grandson. 8190 Nursery Rd., Lusby, MD. 20657. 410 586 8931
- Bob Schutt and Lora, 421 Nordberg N.W., Grand Rapids, MI 49504 616 453 7571
- Aulay Tompkins, 93 Almond Dr., Hershey, PA., 17033, 717 533 6659
- Leonard Straub, 207 N. Maple St., Mount Prospect. IL 60056 847 253 0507
- Phil Hallabrin with Edna, 68 Westgate Dr., Mansfield, OH, 44906 216 526 6305
- Elmer Langbecker with Frances, 1005 Cass St., Portage, WI 53901 608 742 2841
- Steve Popovitch, 6341 22nd Ave., SW, Seattle, WA, 98106 206 767 5673
- Ted Michalowski with Helen, 3413 N. Division St., Davenport, IA 52806, 319 391 7525
- Nate Goldberg with Florence, 86 New England Ave., #50, Summit, NJ. 07901 908 273 7018

The reunion for 2000 AD, will be in Indianapolis on August 30 through September 2nd. For 2001 the Board Of Governors chose Peoria, for early October, 2001.

At the banquet the challenging question as to when the Third Armored Division Assoc. will end its existence, was met with a confident assertion that "we plan on lasting ten more years!" Your editor attended the meeting of the Board of Governors, and believes that when our association can no longer provide the services our fewer members will require, our assoc. will turn its duties over to the Third Armored Div. Assoc. org. of the younger men who were in the Third Armored after World War II. This younger organization still has to prove its stability.

Over 515 registrations were made for the Columbus reunion. The estimated financial balance for the reunion is \$2070

### Third Armored Div. Financial Resources 9/14/99:

Norwest Bank Checking	\$43247.56
MBNA Bank CD	25470.88
Smith Barney Mutual Fund	1469.34
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>70187.78</b>

### THE DAY WE GOT RESPECT!

Please recall that "Hap" regularly contributed poems to the Road Block till he protested that our membership was not contributing items. He shows "he's rarin' to go again!"

We are not created equal  
(If the truth is to be had.)  
The TD's were formed from misfits.  
Even our cadre was bad.  
When the division formed our unit,  
They kept us away from camp.  
The walk from the TD barracks  
To the Third's, was a long, long tramp.  
They sent us to Camp Hood, Texas  
And when we were out of sight  
They packed up and left for the desert  
Leaving behind this blight.  
We followed them to a place named Rice.  
In CAL-KYE-FORN-EYE-A  
Where we were reattached to the division,  
Much to the Third's dismay.  
We crossed the country to Virginia  
In Camp Pickett we had to live close,  
Division men had to rub elbows  
With the troops they despised the most.  
They got away from us on weekends  
Our "Sabbath" suffered a change  
While Division enjoyed their weekends off  
We spent our time on the range.  
Wednesday was our "weekend"  
To spend in backwater Blackstone,  
With no one in town but our rowdies  
Division men were left alone.  
At Indiantown Gap, they did it again,  
Separation came again to the fore,  
Division settled on valley plain.  
Then came the Transportation Corps,  
Then high on the hill were the TD's  
Division had their buffer zone.  
They trained their troops by themselves,  
And we were left alone.

Normandy

Northern France

Rhineland

Ardennes

Central Europe

Then came the demonstration  
 Where we could exercise our might  
 It was an outdoor exhibition  
 Of the tools with which we fight.  
 Down in a ravine was the enemy :  
 (Some trucks, an old tank or two)  
 Tethered like sacrificial lambs  
 All in division's view.  
 I dont remember who fired first  
 'Twas probably artillery.  
 Then tanks with their direct fire,  
 There wasn't such damage to see.  
 Then closing out the performance  
 Almost like an afterthought  
 They let the TD's open fire.  
 Oh! What damage they did wrought.  
 Apocalypse, now! Armageddon  
 Dear Lord how the pieces flew  
 They smashed the trucks and upended tanks  
 Like a demolition crew.  
 It was just a matter of second  
 And we gasped at what they had done,  
 They spent less time firing on the range  
 Than they spent in cleaning their guns.  
 The division saw that destruction  
 More than their finest could match.  
 They gazed in awe and took a new view  
 Of the men with the TD patch.  
 We were no longer rank outsiders  
 For division to scorn and reject,  
 Heads held high, we marched back to camp  
 At last we had earned their respect.

"Nap" Paulson (C)

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**TAPS**

Late in May, Bob Schutt (A) spoke to Jack Moriarty (A), and sadly learned that JOHN PRIOR (A) had succumbed to cancer after a long struggle. Doris would appreciate hearing from his friends in the battalion. "He had a heart attack. He did not suffer, and his family was at the hospital with him. He told us about his friendship with Mate (A). He also enjoyed hearing from you!"

Jack has not suffered any loss of his unique character these last few years, but has been slowed by a touch of Alzheimer's Disease. Ruth would like to know that we care.

Jack and Ruth Moriarty, 10 Crosby St., Arlington, MA 022174  
 617 641 1027

Doris M. Prior, 64 Glenborn Rd., Arlington, MA 02174  
 617 542 7646

MAJA HOY (HQ-RCN) died very shortly after a heart attack, 7/12/99. It was in February of this year that "Ed", her husband, died. Their daughter thoughtfully informed us of her mother's death. "She wanted to be here in Arizona with her friends till her apartment in San Francisco was ready."—She and "Ed" wanted to be cremated and buried near us, so we are making plans —for a full military funeral, and there will be a service for my Mom.—It makes me incredibly sad to have two parents to bury in the space of five months".  
 Brigitte Carnochan 138 Cervantes Rd. Portola Valley, CA 94028  
 650 561 9177

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**CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

Marguerite Newberg dropped us a note that RALPH (B) moved from Florida to the Park Avenue Apts. 404, 150 W. St. Charles Rd., Lombard, IL 60148. He would really enjoy the good word from us!

AMEROSIO, Anthony, and Caroline (C) 8921 S. Evans Ave. Inverness, FL 34452. "Tony's" family wanted him "close" thus moved the couple to where it helped make the family attachments even more meaningful and intense.

PAULSON, "Nap" (C) Two tel. area code changes as of 11/1/99. 17 Private Rd., Yaphank, N.Y. 11980 631 924 8566.  
 124 36th Ave. N. 205E St. Petersburg, FL 33704 727 823 8236

COLLINS, TOM, (B) Change street number, 6102 Tommy Rd., Youngsville, LA 70592 318 937 6219

Bob Schutt (A) found her! He went on the prowl, and with the help of her brother, Bob, located ANNA TOMA (A). She is now in "Assisted Living!" Maybe notes from us will break through and bring her some comfort! Let's try, please!  
 Anna Toma (A) c/o Sister Mary Matthews, 1160 Broadway, Bedford, OH 44146

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FLORENCE and "HANK" GOSCH (C) "would like to thank all the people of the 703rd family who sent cards and made telephone calls to express their wishes for her recovery. The prayers and messages are appreciated, and they helped a lot. Thanks so much to all of you." A more full recovery needs another year.

E X T R A ! 9/5/99 Sunday

Everett Stites called some of us this afternoon, with a happy message, that told us Florence Gosch (C) and Henry had Everett over for dinner very recently. That was exciting in itself. Everett was most keen on Florence's recovery, that with but a cane, a pretty dress and a medical device or two Florence was able to show what her courage has done for her. In another few months she'll be able to show the world through her whitened hair a true recovery. We'll see Everett at the division reunion on the 22nd of this month. He promises to introduce us to his developing friendship.— Add it up for him,—Florence Gosch only needs a cane,—Everett occasionally has his cane with him, and he has a new friend.

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"HAP" and FRANK MILLER (A) TUNE IN

When "Bugs" Miller read that "Nap" would stop contributing poems to the Road Block if our members failed to contribute at least some short tales of their wartime experiences, "Bugs" came through with a "batch of them".

Frank appreciates what Marge does, caring for a wheel-chair-husband even as he complains with his sarcasm aimed at himself! "Nap" called him and "Bugs" is a bit better! What with Don McKiernan (A) hopefully holding his own after another operation, and writing poems "to beat the band", the Road Block will roll along even more when "Nap", again, submits his meaningful lines!

By the way "Nap" lost 4" around the waistline. He wrote, "I feel I can lick my weight in lollipops!"

**WITHOUT EXAGGERATION?**

3/29/99

Dear "Nap" and Ruth,

-----so you wanted outlandish tales, seeing that some of us did outlandish things, and outstandingly stupid things, at this late date no one gives more than a shrug.

Woolner and I rambled around a lot of scenery, frequently in the middle of Europe, during dark, wet, cold nights, and some

times in broad daylight,-- didn't worry about the cost, still young enough. Sometimes we did stupid things together, and at other times, alone--such as at Weisweiler.

Frank (Woolner) wrote that my moustache twitched--he was right! That time I was really chilled, moving up from Eschweiler along a column of infantry, and talking with a platoon leader who was hiking right along with his men. His armored car was just ahead of him. A chance mortar barrage came in! One bounced off the back of the car, actually lit in the knee pocket of a man,-- tore through--landed on the road! I tossed it into a ditch. Frank lost his cool. The damned round could have gone off in my hand--brain not connected to hand--stupid! At the top of the hill, we scrambled to hurl ourselves into a nearby building to escape more incoming mortar fire. --I hit a door falling on top of it, and thought I saw a brass plate which had my name in German with my birth date and space for a new one--goddam! -----I felt like I was in my own coffin, and it shook me up.--Boy! Was I ever scared!-----

We waited and moved up with the infantry. Our jeep was serated (?) in some new places. That year old jeep took a lot of abuse. The holes in it used to kind of whistle as we went along so now we would have some new whistles.

We lost two bottles of weinbrandy or whatever the Kraut cognac was called. That day wasn't over. That's the part I had to guarantee Woolner I wouldn't tell anyone. If Col. Barr knew we had squealed he probably would take away our "free pass"!

You may not have known it, but Frank was Barr's eye on officer efficiency (competency and behavior). We viewed performance and reported to Barr. Several times we caught someone who should never have been in command.

When our side had advanced about 1/4 m. down the forward slope into a batch of evergreens and brush, it belied the jeep down onto a big flat rock with all four wheels up in the air.

The Kraut were throwing a counterattack. A mortar attack forced our infantry back up the slope. We could only get away by going through the mortar fire. Frank and I had time to fieldstrip a couple of Lugers so that if we got caught they wouldn't find them on us. A half dozen of our infantry came by, and were happy to see us, but about that time our artillery did a closeup with 105's. The Kraut left in a hurry. We ran the other way up the hill. When our own guys came up, they helped us get the damned jeep off the rock, and we left with our legs not working well. We did not tell anyone.

In the next hour or so from the safety of the hill top, we watched while Gen'l. Rose admonished a G.I. in a foxhole near us,-- that he should get up and go forward to rejoin his company. Sure looked odd to see him--looked like he was dressed for a "(West) Point Parade". Woolner never wrote up the whole day for the newspaper.

We had a new guy in the liaison group, a Lt. Ravill, brand new from the states,--a teacher who had taught German in Brooklyn. He was eager to get hold of some cognac--never had had any, and apparently someone from where he came had him all fired up on the probabilities he'd get some up with the liaison group. When he got to us he had a flat and no spare tire. It was decided that I would get him over to maintenance for repairs. By the time that was done it was dark. Ravill asked about cognac, and a forward road block did not stop us.

We got to the burgermeister's home. We did not know that the Krauts, mostly, had moved out so that the town was practically without German defenses. I found two daughters who treated us to roast beef sandwiches and cognac as we absorbed some information on some Kraut strong points toward Liège. I never went anywhere without getting some information. This was vital enough so I wouldn't be hung for doing whatever I did. We got back to the

Road Block singing "Ol' Black Joe" in assorted keys, left the tank men a bottle of cognac, got back to an exceedingly exasperated Woolner,--he exploded all over the place, claimed the foxhole I had dug was not deep enough---. I suggested he could have dug a bit himself--we usually split the job--he was not happy over that--then the truth came out. He didn't care if I had gone and committed suicide, but his bed roll was in the jeep and he was freezing to death. While he exhorted, I got the cork out of the bottle, shoved the opening into his mouth and everything got quite rosy.

There were other times which I may bore you with if you ask!

Frank Miller (A)

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#### LET'S HELP KEEP "DON" A WINNER

It was a note we had hoped would come telling us of Don McKiernan's life renewed. Let's not forget that we can't rest on his words that he has won the battle! We have to encourage him to be alert, follow "Doc's" orders, and we must stimulate every effort to let Yolana and Don know we are with them. Don's crewmate, Clair Murray (A) had come to see us, but he had little life left. We could not help! Let Don know how much we care! Here's the McKiernan note of July 4, 1999.

"So grateful to be able to send this note of thanks after winning a battle against Major Cancer Surgery on June 14th. Thanks to my 703rd and 3rd Armored buddies, relatives and friends who sent cards, telephoned Yolana and offered many prayers.-- We made it!

For more than fifty seven years my 703rd "buddies" and I have been friends. We saved each others lives in W.W. II, and continue our Esprit de Corps that started in W.W. II when we met in the 703rd, and it has flourished ever since."

By July 4, 1999, Don was able to write us, and there were additions for 7/17-18-19 in his long letter. He described his room and what gorgeous grounds met his eye outside his window.

In 1991, it had been a dangerous cyst and complications of a kidney disease that necessitated surgery. Now in 1999 the cancerous tumor, unrelated to his problem in 1991, had to be removed. He had been having cancer checks every December, but nothing was ever found. In mid-April, a severe side pain revealed a cancer that was removed on Flag Day, also four ribs and a shoulder muscle. He had his liver and lung "shaved". Stapling was needed to keep him together. The plastic surgeon had to reconstruct his shoulder, side and back.

"Being in good health, I did very well for an old soldier in having that huge operation!"

With "Supernurse Yolana" along side, it'll be into September before he's recovered. He's "walking" with Yolana now, and looks forward to writing letters on the McKiernan personal computer. Don, as ever, adds praise for his children who visited before and after surgery, and his physicians.

**DON SINCERELY BELIEVES WE ARE ALL HEROES. PROVE HIM CORRECT WITH A MESSAGE OF HOPE FOR HIS STEADY RECOVERY.**

Guess what he recalled in his first note? The All Star game was in Fenway Park this year. "Ted" Williams tossed out the first pitch! Back in 1949 Don visited me in Boston, and we went to see the Red Sox and "Ted" play. It meant a lot to Don as we mean a lot to him now!

Don McKiernan (A) 4020 D Layang Layang Circle, Carlsbad, CA 92008

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**SWEET TALK FROM A COMRADE**

**Hi! Nathan Goldberg!**

I want to tell you how much I enjoy reading the 703rd Road Block. It brings back many memories of my husband, Clifford (B), and all his friends in the 703rd. My thoughts and prayers go out to all of them. Sincerely

Dorothy M. O'Connor 540 Ash Drive, Windsor Locks, CT 06096

**FRIEND OF FRIENDS!**

Russ Steele, (Div. Hq.) has taken our pictures at division reunions for many years as well as sending us news and pictures of his visits with Ed McIntyre (A). He and friends were with Ed on Ed's 83rd birthday, 5/21/99.

"Later, 6/27/99, we picked up Ed for the KIO chapter picnic.

Rev. Stitt (3 AD Sec'y-Treasurer) and I had pictures taken of the 32 attendees and mine are still in my camera.----Marge and I are counting down toward the Columbus, Ohio reunion. Enjoyed the Road Block, a good job and a nice plug to the 703rd to be there. It should be a good one. The Ruths and Edmensions have been working on it, but to date we haven't heard of anyone offering to sponsor the 2001 reunion. *{Peoria will be the site}*

Keep as well as you can and we hope to see you there in Columbus."

Marge and Russ Steele (Div. Hq.)

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**H O O R A Y ! TO OUR SOURCES**

Bob Kauffman, (D-36th A.I.R.) helped us contact Hans Zeplien, the former German officer, who gave us his memoirs.

"I would just like to thank you for continuing to mail me copies of your Road Block! I always find it interesting, and it gives me another perspective on the actions in which we were engaged.

It is particularly gratifying to see you carry my friend Hans Replien's story. He truly is a remarkable man. I just had a telephone conversation with him last Friday, and I am looking forward to meeting him, possibly in October.

During our meeting last October, we toured the battlefield at Scherpensteel and Eastenrath once again, and in the course of our visit a reporter showed up from the *Eschweiler Zeitung*. The interview was later published! The stress was put on the fine, friendly results of the renewal of relationships of former enemies.

Please keep up the good work! Perhaps I might see you in Columbus at the division reunion."

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**REGIMENT 89 THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE VII**

Continuation of the Memoirs of Hans Replien, the CO (14co) of Gren. Regt. (GR 89) of the 12th Volksgrenadierdivision (12th VGD)

*Replien's T.D. squads were close to the fighting east of the Bütgenbach Reservation in the early days of "The Bulge". They enjoyed loot from American supplies and food, as well as a temporary cease fire for the Christmas holiday!*

"On the night of Dec. 26 battalion vehicles brought up an orderly officer and a captain. We met them at the "White House" C.P. They were astonished to find us all well and lively. They were happy to have arrived at our position without being greeted with fire from the enemy. We explained the agreement made with our foe. The battalion had been just about written off by the regiment because a report had not been sent to them. After we had emptied a bottle of red wine welcoming the captain, and discussing our positions with him, he gave me instructions that I was being relieved. I was glad to be "off the hook". I took off at dawn with my personal messenger dropping him off at the 7co CP where I had originally picked him up. I reported to Col. Lemcke on the situation of the 2nd battalion, then I guess I slept somewhere." *TTTTT*"

Hans' paybook section on decorations stated that he was getting leave because he had suffered eight wounds, an award for bravery, and leave granted between 12/26/44 to 1/19/45. Replien went to his birthplace at Landsberg/Warthe, E. of the Oder River.

Hans returned to his regiment about 1/20/45. Only the trains were left including his personal messenger who told him that the 2nd battalion had been used in the Bastogne/St. Vith area. Around 1/6/45 the Americans had broken through, the battalion destroyed or taken prisoner.

Around 1/23/45 (?) the first elements of a new 2nd Battalion of the Gren.Regt. 89 were organized near Düren. First thing to do with the young, former members of the Navy (?), was to train in the terrain for infantry combat, especially camouflage. They had to be told that the time for the infantry, "Hurrah!" was over. With added manpower the battalion was used in the Rifel area for blocking operations in the course of which the returned Hans was seriously wounded, and the fighting was over for him.

The events involving his battalion while he was on leave were related to him by the CO. On 12/26/44 orders changed the mission from a defensive to an offensive operation, and an attack was launched in the Bütgenbach Reservoir. There had been initial successes but insufficient to maintain hold on the little gained.

"When I heard of our failure I felt clearly that a turning point of the war could no longer be achieved, even by operations as massive as the Battle of the Bulge. Our hope was that we could keep hold of the Ruhr Valley long enough to allow our industry to produce the awaited weapons to withstand the murderous advances of the Soviets. Rapidly becoming worse on the eastern front, conditions there lowered our morale. Slowly we were becoming aware of the start of the total collapse of the Reich.

From 12/16-12/29 there were no losses or casualties in the antitank squads of 14co. Gren.Regt.89 returned to defensive positions near Wirtzfeld. The American tanks could not be used in the bad weather and terrain. The 14co troops had captured an antitank gun, and set it up near the company CP. They worked hard to get some armor piercing or high explosive shells from captured US stocks. Finally they got some, and stored the ammo in a cellar near the location of the gun. They still enjoyed food from US supplies, and drank so much coffee that they could not fall asleep in the evenings. Luckily, they had commandeered big tins of preserved pears, peaches, etc. They lived as in a fool's paradise through the festive season. At least in this respect we did not quarrel with our fate.

On 12/29 the 12VGD received orders for a move south. There was little anger in the men for deeply inward they still hoped for a turning point not knowing how it would come about. The mist cleared, and yet, enemy air attacks did not increase on the next day. The move was made, mostly, in the dark. The 14co during the move was comprised of a HQ squad, the anti-tank force, and trains. The 14co personnel strength as of 1/1/45, as a whole, was 1 officer, 10 NCO's, 59 men, 4 volunteers. The combat strength consisted of an officer, 6 NCO's and 32 men. We moved past St. Vith. On 12/31 our battalion reached its new area near Juvigny or Liersenx. The rest of the company lined up for a New Year's address on the morning of 1/1/45.

Enemy artillery fire was more stiff here than in the Mürringen-Wirtzfeld area. They had to time crossings of a key intersection to avoid harassing fire. On 1/2 or 1/3 his company

was ordered to establish contact with FusRegt 27. Fulfilling that dangerous chore, the company was then given reconnaissance and monitoring assignments till 1/4/45."

The company had a Non-Com, Sgt. Janetzka, with whom Replien had been the chief instructor on a training unit with the 12 Inf Div. Janetzka was a top flight soldier, round faced, fair-haired. There had been a close relationship between the two men.

Dogtired, Replien, on returning, reported to his CO on 1/20. He had not slept for 24 hours. He was ordered to take command of 3co GrenRegt 89, temporarily. They had lost their last officer and Replien was thought to be familiar with the whole sector of the regiment.

Feeling as if he had been hit by a stroke. He could only answer with a "Yes, sir!", and off he went. He was now, commander of 14co and another infantry company quite distant from it. Due to brevity of time, Replien ordered his HQ squad to relay all orders through the company sergeant. "Taking a messenger with me, I tried to find the CP 1 Bn. We advanced along a creek. The moon was shining, and the ground covered with snow, so it was not too difficult to negotiate. The CP was in a water mill, so we could not miss it. Listening to the grumble of shells over our heads, we took cover now and then. I reported to the CO 1 Bn. as ordered, to take command of 3co. 30 hours without rest had passed, and I was ordered to "take a break". The only space to rest was under the CO's bed. I slept but two hours. I was anxious to be at 3co while it was still dark, and to get to know the sector."

TO BE CONTINUED

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#### FROM THE "TOPKICK" OF THE 703rd

Ed Hoy knew early in life that he had been blessed with a photogenic, retentive memory. Lapses and mental blocks came up occasionally when he reached his "seventies"! But he was never compelled to keep a diary!

From constant entries in various company reports which were written in the states, he soon noticed that he could remember the assigned serial numbers (ASN) of many men in Reconnaissance Co., and decided to make an effort to memorize the others. His ASN was 6917730, only seven digits because he was regular army. Most men of his company were draftees and had 8 digit ASN's. For those in the know he was some kind of a mental freak for the accomplishment of memorizing the ASN's of the 149 men in the company.

The company orderly room was in the front half of a small one story building not far from the barracks. Some afternoons when he was sleepy and events permitted, he would take a short nap. Above his desk was a trap door that led to a low attic. He felt that if he went to his room to nap, there were good odds that someone would find him and wake him over some small matter

that could have waited. So he secretly took some boards and a mattress up into the attic for unmolested naps.

He had just crawled up into his hideaway, one afternoon, shut the trap door and reclined on the mattress when he heard voices below. One was a company officer. He was with a lieutenant from a neighboring battalion.

Remaining quiet above the talking, this is what Hoy heard,

"I'm sorry our 1st Sergeant is not here. I wanted to show you his amazing memory. He knows by heart, and he can tell you the correct ASN of every man in the company!"

"Where do you get all your tall yarns---that's impossible."

"Damn you, I'm not telling stories! We'll come back in an hour or so, and if he's here then, I'll prove it to you!"

When the orderly room was vacant, Hoy descended from the attic, chuckling to himself and doing a little plotting.

When the officers returned, Hoy was ready for them. After introductory greetings, then praise from his officer for his keen memory, he was asked to demonstrate his ability. The "top kick" said that he would do the best he could. Hoy reached for a company roster, and gave it to the other officer who was grinning in disbelief. He picked a name on the roster, and asked for his ASN. On this first challenge Hoy had the correct answer. The officer was a bit nonplussed, but then selected another name. Hoy now chose to give an incorrect number. The challenging officer gave a gloating look at his embarrassed colleague and said, "I knew you were a bull-shitter! What have you got to say now?" Hoy's shavetail looked despairingly at him, and didn't reply. They both started to leave. By then Hoy was in a fit of laughter, but said, "Sirs, please,---try me again!" They did and he correctly reeled off the ASN's for the many names they selected.

The Staff Sergeant of Reconnaissance Company's Pioneer platoon was George Boyce, who had been a coal-miner, and came from one of the local mining towns. He invited Hoy on more than one weekend trip into his hard coal country. Through George and his mining friends, Hoy learned the hazards of the coal mining profession. Throughout the hard coal country Hoy would meet families who had lost someone in the mines. Most miners that he met were of Irish, Welsh, or Polish extraction. They were all big-hearted people who worked hard, played hard, and drank hard.

George introduced Hoy to the coal mining towns of Pottsville, Ashland, Shamokin, and Mount Carmel. In most of these towns they had volunteer fire-fighting associations with their own private clubs. One reason for the private clubs readily became apparent. These coal miners liked their drinks, but by Pennsylvania law, commercial bars and state-owned liquor stores were closed on Sundays. However the law permitted alcoholic drinks at the private clubs on Sundays if you belonged to the fire-fighting association, and had a private key to the club.

George had a key to the Mt. Carmel Cloverleaf Fire-fighting Club, and brought Hoy as a guest. They always had a great time at the Cloverleaf. It was simply good food, strong drinks, rollicking dancing, and the most fun-loving people Hoy had ever met! The dancing featured polkas and schottisches. Frequently a member of the band would step forward and instruct the entire gathering in these and other dances. Hoy had no trouble in finding eager dance partners, and dates.

George was full of entertaining stories and jokes. One night I was having dinner with George and his lovely wife, Anna. They had been telling me that they had had a long courtship before finally getting married. The way George told it,-- that as they had been dating each other for something like fifteen years when Anna said to him, "George--, after all these years we're not getting younger. Don't you think it's finally time that we married?" To which George said that he replied, "Yes, Anna I do. But WHO would have us now?" Ed Roy (Rcn-Rq)

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#### GERMANS TRY ATTACK TOWARDS ANTWERP

The Way to "The Bulge"

November 12, 1944

Shrapnel hit burly Del Legrant (2A), sending him to the hospital. He was peppered on the way up some stairs in Büsbach a few days ago. Our motor sergeant, Otto Strahn, was a recipient of a carbine slug from the weapon of Louis Belletto (A), in jest of course!. It was a clean wound into Strahn's calf. Men on pass to Verviers in Belgium, saw Gautreau (2A), and Stan Reska (A) was standing guard at the nearby replacement center. Ralph Steinhart (A) wrote our mail orderly, "Izzy" Friedman (A), to hold his mail. Steinhart (A) and Barbalinardo (A), also, are at Verviers.

On November 10th we moved from Hahn to Büsbach. Each of our guns have fired, indirectly, at least 500 or more rounds. Four have fired over 600 rounds. We have been alerted for impending action.

November 18, 1944

It was not only Henry Morgenthau's article in TIME (2 Oct 44) but others that filled me with disillusion, despair and disgust. Early in the issue there were proposals for the political, and economic partition of Germany: On the next page there was a discussion whether four nations can debate and settle an argument if one of them is the cause or involved in having created the mess! Can that nation vote as an equal with the three victors in the war? Then, following the next page, were items dealing with our American elections. Major Saythe criticized the poor training of Canadian soldiers. On to the Chinese mess, and the weakness of France as she demands that she will be given "The Rhineland and be treated as a first-rate power!" It was a selfish pleasure to read of the hard but smoothly working Russian power

machine, but not of its casualties! Let's continue to read of the filth in Italy where people are either looking for a handout or stealing,--- where the land has not been used to good advantage,--where good intentions mean nothing in a scene of confusion and disorder. There's the English essayist explaining why allied soldiers will never non-fraternize with German civilians. TIME has room left to hack away at the politically appointed leadership of the Chicago schools, the monopoly of American Air Ways and its \$.835 per mile promises, and the racketeer who is selling surplus army and navy commodities. The best essay in the magazine is the review of Van Wyck Brook's, *The World of Washington Irving*, "The World of Washington Irving". World '0

All this adds up to what I've previously mentioned. We are not to fraternize with German civilians. I and many of our men have disobeyed those orders. The family I know are the Ziemons, who have lived in America. Herr Ziemons is 53, gray, a machinist-millwright who works in Stolberg for William Prin, an English industrialist controlling an international corporation. The factory in Stolberg manufactured ordinary notions, particularly spools of thread. Herr Ziemons has a tall, slim wife and one daughter, Mary, 20, who works for our military government as an interpreter. They have lived both in Chicago and Florida, and left for Germany in 1939. Herr Ziemons had served in the German Army in W.W. I. Frau Ziemons has relatives in Germany. I have doubts as to why they came back here. What was the attraction of the German call for the return of its citizens as the German army crossed into Holland in 1939?

Mary is most devoted to a certain "Paul" to whom she is engaged. He is a "noncom." in the German Air Force. I often came to where the Ziemons lived deeply in their cellar as protection from German shelling. A boyish colleague joined me there. On our last visits, Mary was sewing on the fringes of his watchband. M.P.'s patrol the streets to pick up fraternizers, but we watch our step. Occasionally leftovers from the kitchen are turned over to these people who haven't much to eat. But it's the contradiction that bothers me! Here I am associating with the folks of men who would kill us, and are doing it. They are fighting a hopeless battle which is costing many lives. Just ahead we see the Thunderbolts (P-40's) dive, strafe, bomb, and B-26's and A208's bomb ahead of the 104th Inf. Div. driving for Eschweiler, yet I fraternize. How can I know what those people did or are doing? How can we feed them? Didn't they stand by and see what happened to their Jewish neighbors? These people seem to be O.K., but--the propaganda fed us tells us the Germans only understand rough treatment, that they consider fair handling as weakness. We talk of Christmas, food, and people we know. We laughed and joked,--what a funny world. Sometimes I wanted to kick myself for coming to visit this home, rifle on my lap!

I say nothing that would be of value to them,--I can't hate!

Continued December 27, 1944

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#### THE SHADY SIDE OF THE TARGET!

William R. French (B) was KIA'd close to the end of the action in the "Bulge". His name reappeared in Ed Hoy's memoirs, (*Road Block*, X,2,7 6/99 "I Save a Life"), Col. Showalter recently doubted Hoy's yarn concerned with the battalion's failure to award Hoy a "medal" for having saved Bill's life in a near drowning incident on the Colorado River on the Mohavi Desert desert. John "The Barber" Czajkowski" (B) claimed to have heard of the event, and Col. Showalter accepted Hoy's story as correct. Everett Stites (Rcn) was involved in easing the potential quarrel.

It would be too much to expect that our officers were utterly fair in their recommendations for honors. Officers require discipline in their behavior, and our battalion suffered the questionable behavior of some of its would-be leaders, non coms or line officers!

"Hap" Paulson (A,C) knows Hoy's tale, and made cutting remarks in a letter to your editor on how "medals were awarded!"

"Hap" claims the appointments to Company Commander and Platoon Leader were made at the time when A3 had been selected the best TD platoon in the ETO, yet "Hap" was taken from the platoon so that he missed the opportunity to "dine at Buckingham Palace". Also they restricted him to base camp bringing in TD officers "blooded" in the African desert to tell our battalion officers how to fight. What did those experienced officer know of how to handle our men in hedgerow country? A weeding drove only "Hap" aside for "better" officers. Three of them didn't last a month having to be relieved and evacuated. A fourth suffered combat fatigue bad enough so that his platoon had to be assigned to a reserve status! "Hap" received his platoon a bit later as a shavetail, without the promotion other platoon leaders received. Reid, in "Hap's" platoon, 2C, knocked out more German tanks in one foray than the platoons of officers appointed ahead of "Hap"? Some of

those officers appointed ahead of "Hap" were shot or captured because they couldn't read a map! "Hap" has little sympathy for Col. Showalter's concern that Hoy exaggerated his claim for a citation!

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**G E N T L E M E N !**

"Bob" Schutt and "Len" Straub need not mention your names, however, eighteen 703rd members have failed to pay dues these past two years. This shall be your last notice of delinquency. Thank you for "catching up"!  
Bob Schutt

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