

The
TANK
 CANADA

No. 1 Camp Borden, Ontario, December-January, 1941-2 Vol. 2

**IN
 THIS
 ISSUE**

EDITORIAL	1
CHRISTMAS MESSAGE	2
GIVE THE TROOPS A BREAK	3
FROM BEHIND THE 8-BALL AT A-8	5
REVEILLE TO RETREAT AND LATER	7
WATCHING THE WRECKERS	8
CONVOY ON THE 30 YARD LINE	9
VICTORY'S COTTER PINS	10
C.A.C. WOMEN'S AUXILIARY	11
TANK FIGHTER TEAM	17
ONE WAY TO GET THERE	20

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Please address all subscriptions to
 the Editor.

Message from The Editor

Due to the exigencies of the service it has been necessary to reorganize the editorial staff of YOUR magazine. The last issue carried a farewell from Lt. W. S. Thomson, and it is hardly necessary for us to say that filling his role in connection with the publication is not going to be an easy one. Re-organization of the staff has now been completed and names of those in charge may be interesting. They include: Chairman, Major A. L. Tosland, M.C.; Editor, Lt. L. W. Taylor; Associate Editors, Lts. L. H. Taylor and A. D. Pryce; Business Manager, Lt. J. N. Yanover.

With the help of all our readers and of other friends we hope to continue to make this magazine one of interest and information to a wide circle. With your help we feel sure we shall head strongly on the charted course of becoming the most eagerly anticipated monthly publication reaching Armoured Corps personnel.

Honest, hard-hitting, constructive criticism will be welcomed. We intend to develop news sources overseas and hope to present an all-round picture of C.A.C. work at home and abroad. Plans have been made for the collection of this type of news, and while the results will not become immediately apparent, owing to the intervention of such matters and time and space, we expect they will build up as the months pass.

It is our intention to present the ideas and viewpoints of informed heads of the various departments and other recognized leaders in armoured formation endeavours. We take pride in pointing out the first of these in this edition, a thoughtful article by Col. E. L. M. Burns, O.B.E., M.C., which is recommended for your attention.

This is your magazine. You can make it a success. Show your interest by offering news contributions and by supporting our advertisers. That's all for now, and we trust our monthly meetings will be mutually helpful and enjoyable.

In closing, we extend heartiest greetings for the Christmas season, and trust that the New Year will bring us all realization of our fondest hopes.



Maj.-Gen. C. F. Constantine, D.S.O.

Christmas Message to the C.A.C.

To all Ranks of the
Canadian Armoured Corps:

ON this Christmas of 1941, the District Officer Commanding, Military District No. 2, extends to you: Best wishes and good luck!

Most of you, whether overseas now or still training here, learned the fundamental lessons of modern warfare in this district. For that reason, the staff of M. D. 2 has a more than ordinary interest in your progress and accomplishments.

I appreciate very much the existence of a magazine like "The Tank," which gives me this opportunity of greeting you. I wish the magazine continued prosperity and am sure that the "horse-sense" applied to its editing in the past, especially in keeping its humor and quips not too pointed, will continue to influence its course.

To all ranks of the Canadian Armoured Corps, greetings of the Yuletide season are again extended. You have a big part to play in the big job faced in 1942 by the armies of the Empire. I am sure you will do that job well.

Good luck!

C. F. CONSTANTINE, Major-General,
District Officer Commanding, M. D. 2,
Toronto.

Give the Troops a Break

Colonel E. L. M. Burns,
O.B.E., M.C.

We are very pleased to publish an article by Colonel E. L. M. Burns, O.B.E., M.C., which is well worth reading. This is the first article by the Officer Administering, Canadian Armoured Corps and we hope to obtain others from time to time.

COL. E. L. M. BURNS,
O.B.E., M.C.

I have been told that young Canadian soldiers often remark, "The Army never gives you a break." If they believe this, their state of mind is indeed unhappy, for they believe what will make them discontented, and what is false. The Canadian Army does give the man in the ranks a break—and for proof of this statement, consider the roll of Divisional Commanders. Maj.-Gen. G. R. Pearkes, V.C., D.S.O., M.C., commanding the 1st Canadian Division was in the ranks during the last Great War, as was Maj.-Gen. C. B. Price, D.S.O., D.C.M., commanding the 3rd Canadian Division. Maj.-Gen. Odlum, who has recently retired from the command of the 2nd Canadian Division, was in the ranks in the South African War; and Maj.-Gen. E. W. Sansom, D.S.O., commanding the 5th Canadian (Armoured) Division, was in the ranks prior to the last Great War. Brigadier F. F. Worthington, M.C., M.M., commanding the 1st Canadian Army Tank Brigade, also served in the ranks. So a brass hat is within the reach of any Canadian recruit, who has the will and strength to climb the tree.

"The Army never gives you a break." This generality, true or false, should be pondered by Officers of every grade. Are you seeing that all the men under your command get the breaks they deserve? Is it possible that they feel that their desires for advancement are thwarted, and that their merits are not recognized? If they are not impressed by the life histories of generals, mentioned above, then close at hand there are plenty of examples of speedy—and deserved—promotion, for the Canadian Armoured Corps is a young and growing organization; it will probably grow much bigger before the war is won; so there will be advancement for every tankman who has character and ability.

Although personal ambition should not be a prime motive of anyone serving in the armed forces, yet undoubtedly, it is a spur to achievement, and there are not many forceful and combative men who have not a strong desire for personal success. In other words, leadership and ambition are companion qualities. A desire for the respect and approbation of one's fellows is right and socially beneficial. So leaders must take account of this common human characteristic.

But it is necessary to make the ambitious man understand that he has to earn his tradespay, his stripe, or his commission. He must show himself a good soldier, must acquire the skill needed for his trade; display the qualities that a good officer must have. The Army will give the good soldier a "Break," but a "Break" does not mean something for nothing.

It is the duty of every Officer to get the best out of his men—not only in the training and fighting of his troop as it exists, but by thinking of the potentialities of each individual in that troop, and making an opportunity to develop them to the full extent. No waste of material! In your troop there should be no potential sergeants who remain as troopers; no potential lieutenants who remain corporals; no potential mechanics who remain just drivers.

We must all aim at self-improvement, and the Officer must be the guide and helper of his men to that end. This means that Officers must know their men well; not only their demeanour and efficiency as soldiers on parade and in the workshop; but also their character as individuals, their preferences, opinions and dislikes. Such knowledge must be gained in informal conversation, which can only be attained when the constraint of the ordinary relation of Officer and subordinate is broken down. If the Officer is the right sort, this will happen naturally on Active Service, when contact between Officers and men is practically continuous. In barracks or camp life, however, occasions must be made. Games and entertainments are the best means of breaking down formality.

What I have written, I fear, is merely a laboured paraphrase of Matthew 25:15-30, the parable of the Talents. That parable is worth reading again—and acting upon.

This war has been a weary waiting for the Canadian Army, but before it is over we shall meet the enemy. If we hope to defeat him, we can give nothing less than our best; and we must give it now, and in the time of preparation left to us. Boredom, discouragement, and apathy are the great enemies; we all must fight them, and help others to fight them. One way that Officers must wage this fight has been outlined above. We must all strive for improvement now, and in the months that remain to us before the trial, for when the day comes, it will be useless to wish for the skill, the knowledge and the fortitude that we can only acquire by hard work during the time of our training.



TO ALL OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE CANADIAN ARMOURD CORPS, WE WISH TO EXTEND OUR SINCERE GOOD WISHES FOR CHRISTMAS AND THE NEW YEAR AND OUR HEARTY THANKS FOR YOUR PATRONAGE IN THE PAST.



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As we go to press the following names have been entered on our list of new subscribers:

Sgts.' Mess
No. 4 Dist. Depot
Montreal

Officers' Mess
No. 4 Dist. Depot
Montreal

Essex Tank Bn.
Windsor, Ont.

Lieut. Cornish
C.A.C. H.Q.
Camp Borden

Lieut. W. L. Macpherson
C.A.C. Overseas

Corporals' Mess
No. 4 Dist. Depot
Montreal

New Brunswick Regt. (T)
Moncton, N.B.

Men's Canteen
No. 4 Dist. Depot
Montreal

Lt. Col. W. Mavor
N.D. H.Q.
Ottawa

Fort Garry Horse,
2nd Reg't.
No. 10 District Depot
Winnipeg, Man.

Capt. F. N. Spenard
No. 4 Dist. Depot
C.A.C. Increment Wing
Montreal

A Message from the Commandant of C.A.C. (A) T.C., A-8

To the present personnel of this centre and those who have left for more active theatres, I extend my heartiest wishes for a cheerful Yuletide season.

As the year closes I must thank you for your loyal co-operation and effort. We know now that our job in the coming year has assumed Herculean proportions, but we **MUST** and **WILL** measure up to that task.

May 1942 bring you luck.

Lieut.-Col. A. McGoun.

**FROM BEHIND THE
8-BALL AT A-8**

In line with the policy of the C.A.C. to develop the efficiency of its personnel to the high standards required in our service, a group of 35 or 40 junior officers from the Armoured Corps Wing O.T.C. (E.C.) Brockville, visited A-8 in November for a three-day tactics demonstration, before going into their special tactics course at Brockville. The results were most satisfactory from a training point of view and it is expected quotas will be sent up each month for this particular instruction.

Several Junior officers having finished their advanced training here were returned to Brockville to act as Directing Staff on Special Tactics T.E.W.T.S for one week. Among these were Lieut. John Munroe and Lieut. "Mike" Wilson.

* * *

MARRIAGES

Among the smiling bridegrooms noted around this centre during the past month were:

Cpl. W. H. Robinson who agreed to share his pay with the former Lillian Jones of Toronto.

S/Sgt. L. T. Kayer, tied the knot at Bobcaygeon, marrying Miss Winnifred Bennett.

Tpr. A. E. Young joined the ever-increasing throng of married but happy soldiers in Edmonton, in November.

2/Lieut. G. T. J. Barrett, recorded his knotting to Emma Hamilton at Lorne Park, Ont.

Tpr. A. Peace was married in Toronto, early in November.

Cpl. A. McNevin was married in Pugwash, N.S. Tpr. W. L. McLellan at Angus, Ont., to the former Elizabeth Pattison.

Tpr. J. Cooper married at St. Catharines to the former Aileen Palmer.

2/Lieut. A. D. White was married in Toronto, November 29 to the former Mary Geraldine Perrin.

2/Lieut. J. G. Fulton married the former Miss Peggy Strickland in Belleville early in December.

BIRTHS

Cigars and in most cases just large grins were being doled out during the past few months by chest-thumping male parents around this centre. Among the solid and patriotic citizens were noted:

Trooper R. J. Laidlaw, of Montreal, the new arrival, a daughter.

Trooper O. J. Mack, father of a son, Alan James Mack.

Sgt. W. McMath, who was presented with a baby daughter, Colleen Elizabeth.

Tpr. J. Stewart, presented with a son, John Alexander.

Sgt. C. C. Pipella, had a daughter presented to him at Calgary.

Lieut. Les. Nelson was presented with a son, Thursday, December 4th.

* * *

SPORTS

This centre is fortunate in having secured, even though temporarily, the services of Lieut. D. L. Williams of the L.S.H., as Sports Officer.

Having had the misfortune to fall into Mr. McWilliams hands for a couple of hours of setting-up exercises, from which this writer emerged a completely subdued individual, we can truthfully report on his enthusiasm and ability to put his "stuff" over.

The Sports Officer announces the establishment of a sports palace in Drill Hall E-41, just behind the Sally Ann. Basketball, Badminton, Boxing, Bordenball, Volleyball and Indoor-baseball are among the more pleasurable sports that can be indulged in. Hockey will be under Mr. McWilliams supervision and the first heavy frost will see the A-8 Knights of the Nickel Blades, doing their stuff. (We hope).

* * *

WIRELESS WING: iiWii

When Capt. E. H. Kerr arrived back in Camp Borden a few months ago after an absence of a number of years, he no doubt wondered what this business of Armoured Corps signals was all about. However, after quietly observing things for a while, he set himself the fair-sized problem of building up a wing that would take second place to none for completeness and efficiency, a task in which he has had the valuable assistance of Capt. E. T. Bagshaw.

This called for a sweeping re-organization of teaching material, teaching methods and teaching personnel. —Please see page 20



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REVEILLE TO RETREAT and Later

AT A-9 C.A.C.-A.T.C. (A.F.)

NICE GOING, GANG!

At 1100 hours on October 31st the training wing of A-9 was ordered to have a draft of 80 men ready for overseas service at once. By 2300 hours in the same day every man was medically examined, fitted out with extra equipment and clothing, taken through the gas chamber, documented, and the group split up and drafted to three different units. In all, it took about ten hours and a bit. That is a record hard to beat.

* * *

DO YOU BELIEVE THIS—

There are 2,305,843,009,213,693,951 ways to change a \$5 bill using all the different size coins, nickels, dimes, quarters, half-dollars, dollars in different quantities to make up the exact amount. If you made a change each second, 24 hours a day, until the job was completed it would take 103 years.

If you don't believe it, try it.

* * *

Red, white and blue hailstones fell in Russia in 1880.

* * *

A Luzonese woman danced 142 hours without stopping.

* * *

INFORMATION WANTED DEPARTMENT

How did Sgt. Hamlin feel after his massage at the R.A.P.?

Which young officer ordered, "One round, rapid fire?"

Which sergeant said that a graveyard was "dead ground."

If a blonde and a red-head are the attraction at Barrie Arena for two terphsically-minded of our sgts?

Who was the sgt. in D. and M. that wanted a tank sewn on his overcoat.

As in every army camp—when will the R.S.M. learn a new song?

A certain staff sergeant prefers Toronto to Windsor for week-ends. How come?

Does riding around in a new Dodge (army issue) make you put on weight?

* * *

MOVING SCENE

As of this issue, the officers, staff and instructional, are in three different messes. And in several more each time they move. Present location not certain, however.

* * *

REALLY INTERESTED

All ranks are watching to see how U.S. tanks are making out in Libya in the new show. A lot of interested onlookers may have a very personal interest in one in the future—not too distant they hope.

WELCOME GUESTS

The recent visit of English Armoured Div. personnel was appreciated by A-9. The visitors proved themselves to be congenial guests, and they were able to impart a good deal of valuable information for the staff and students.

* * *

WAITING FOR ICE

Sgt. Whitmore and his working party deserve a lot of credit for the very fine hockey rink enclosure they have built. It is 200 feet long and 85 feet wide and will be the largest outdoor rink in camp. All we need now is some ice-making weather.

* * *

REQUEST DEPT.

Popular demand is noted for voice culture on the part of Sgt. McKenzie. Lessons from the young lady who sings in the Mess on Sundays might make his efforts in the hut at night a bit more interesting, or something.

That staff sergeants cease turning out men for guard duty at 0800 hours.

* * *

NEW FACES

Among the officer personnel to arrive here for training in the past few weeks are included the following: Lts. H. H. Dunn, H. F. Z. Gunderson, C. E. Gunderson, W. D. Edgar, C. C. MacLachlan, A. C. Marshall; and 2nd Lts. R. A. Finlayson, F. Fisher, J. C. Harvey, W. Landreth, W. F. Hull, W. J. Martin, H. A. Martin, R. Shearer, M. Shulman, G. Donaldson, A. F. Armstrong, H. Andersen, J. F. Howes, A. E. Doig, B. Cammon, A. Hetherington, H. S. Keith, C. W. March, G. M. Miller, N. D. MacEachern, J. Pelton, C. Phelps, P. Truscott, V. Stilwell, W. Thomson, J. M. Wood, B. Wilson, D. Laird, D. J. Chant, J. A. Holgate, J. F. Morton, E. Spafford, A. D. Thornton, H. D. Yuile, L. D. Johnson, G. S. Rose, A. C. Scinger. We feel sure they will like Camp Borden and A-9.

SEND YOUR LETTERS

It is the earnest hope of the editorial staff of "The Tank" that its readers will feel free to communicate ideas and criticisms (and we hope they will be helpful) at any time. Your letters, which should be of reasonable length, will be given space here.

If you have a notion that might help, send it along. Names need not necessarily be printed, although they must accompany all letters, including a pen name if you wish to remain anonymous.

Address all such letters to, "Editor, The Tank, Canadian Armoured Corps Headquarters, Camp Borden."

WATCHING THE WRECKERS

Life With the 18th Man. Recce. Bn.

SPORTS NEWS

The floor hockey league is well under way with "B" Company leading. The officers' team, after holding the lead in the early games, has slipped down near the bottom, not because they are weakening but many of them are carrying bad bruises.

League standing to date:

"B" Company	14
Senior N.C.O.'s	13
H.Q. Company	12
"C" Company	11
Junior N.C.O.'s	9
Officers	8
"A" Company	8

* * *

JUST A NATURAL

Information has been received at the 18th (Man.) Recce. Bn. that a new recruit, 20 year old Lloyd Irwin of Belmont, Manitoba, has been signed on at Winnipeg. This same recruit rolled five sevens on his first day in the army, Thursday, 27th November, when he obtained the lucky regimental number H.77777. Dice experts predict he will become a general some day.

Lloyd is 5 feet 9 3/4 inches in height and weighs 155 pounds.

He will go to a Basic Training Centre before joining his Unit at Camp Borden. Lloyd's brother, Raymond Irwin, H.77072, is already serving in the 18th (Man.) Recce. Bn., having joined this unit on 22nd May in Winnipeg.

* * *

"I'm sorry I haven't a nickel," said the lady as she handed the street car conductor a 10 bill.

"Don't worry, lady," replied the conductor, "you'll have 199 of them in a minute."

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TORONTO CANADA

Convoy on the 30 yd. Line

By D. H. WATSON

On the week-end of November 29 and 30, the 18th (Man.) Recce. Bn., C.A., undertook their first convoy exercise. A preliminary road reconnaissance outlined a route which would take the convoy to Toronto, Ont., and return, during which, embussing and debussing of troops, driving on first and second class roads through towns and heavy city traffic. March discipline, use of control posts and the harbouring of vehicles was carried out. Barring incidental mistakes it was a perfect convoy considering it was the unit's initial one.

Twenty-two officers and 451 other ranks were scheduled to leave unit lines at 0700 hours by motor transport. The first vehicle crossed the starting point at exactly that time and at 0704 hours the last one was rolling out on to the road. Forty army vehicles of every size and description moved slowly like phantom monsters droning through the darkness, taking proper distance with the gradually increasing speed. By devious roads the previously prepared route cards directed the long convoy up steep hills, down into deep valleys, around sharp curves, over bridges, some of doubtful capacity, to wind up along the wide lake shore drive into Toronto without a mishap of any kind.

HALF-AND-HALF

During the first half of the journey an incident occurred which might easily have been avoided but which provided a thrilling chase and an interesting experience for those involved. As the convoy left Borden in the early darkness the assistant drivers had to read their route cards with the use of a flashlight. But alas, someone had forgotten to bring a flashlight and again, alas, his vehicle was in the middle of the convoy. However, he undertook to follow the tail light of the vehicle ahead, which was no easy task through hilly country over winding roads as he soon found out, with the result he took a wrong turning and the rear portion of the convoy quite confidently followed.

Fortunately, Major Muton, officer in charge of the convoy had stopped at a control point to check the vehicles through and was bringing up the rear of the column when he discovered the mistake. Then began the chase to reach the leader of the lost section. An extra spurt of speed found the leading truck some miles down the road and the lost convoy was lead across country by a short cut over much worse roads. After much bumping about and straining of nerves, the divorced column was once more joined without any time being lost.

The "Recces." are grateful to the six dispatch riders from A-19 R.C.A.S.C. (A) T.C. for the splendid work they did in maintaining control. To quote Major Muton, "Their work was simply marvellous." Our own M.C. drivers and those who hope to be dispatch riders learned much from these efficient boys.

The Toronto Police were most co-operative in supplying a motorcycle escort for the convoy when it entered the city much to the delight of the drivers who were able then to go through a stop light and get away with it.

By some happy circumstances, the "Recces." choice of this particular week-end for their convoy exercise was a most fortunate one. The Grey Cup Football final was to be played that Saturday afternoon with the Winnipeg Blue Bombers opposing the Ottawa Rough Riders for the Dominion title.

Major Homer S. Robinson, temporary Officer Commanding, of the unit, prominent in Canadian sports for many years, was not long in making the necessary arrangements for the entire party to attend the game.

Marching into the Stadium with the band leading, the "Recces." circled the field in their best marching style before 20,000 football fans. At a word of command they quickly occupied the seats reserved for them, providing an unusual sight of some 500 black berets in one solid block and adding a colorful note to this important clash between the east and the west.

What a Winnipeg day that was, the Bombers coming through with a sensational victory, the 18th Reconnaissance from Winnipeg backing them up every inch of the way.

Each time the Bombers would make a point there was a tremendous ovation from that black block. Hundreds of berets would fly into the air, the band would blast a tune that stirred the Bombers to even greater efforts. Then each time the Westerners were in a tight spot, a thundering three words were heard from 500 throats, "HOLD THAT LINE!" Why, Ottawa just couldn't win against a team that had such support.

THE POST PARADE

The moment the game was over the "Recces." tore down onto the field in a struggling maze of berets and khaki and uprooted the goal posts. They paraded the field, then out onto Bloor Street with six stalwarts holding the goal posts aloft in exultant victory. The streets were lined with fans and pedestrians who cheered mightily as the boys marched by.

Major Connie Smythe, O.C., 30th L.A.A., and manager of the Toronto Maple Leafs, was helpful in arranging billets for the Battalion at the Government Building, Exhibition grounds which his battery occupied.

It was a gala day too, for Lt.-Col. R. Wood of the War Office who accompanied the convoy to Toronto where he saw his first Canadian Rugby game. Later in the day he occupied a box at the Maple Leaf Gardens where he witnessed his first big time professional hockey game.

Sunday morning the convoy having once more embussed for the return journey proceeded to the Royal York on their way out. The men formed up on parade and the Blue Bombers came out to the entrance. Major Homer S. Robinson then presented Art Stevenson, Captain of the Bombers with the goal posts. In his reply, Stevenson thanked the unit for their invaluable support and said that it had boosted the team morale to great heights. Also in attendance were Mayor John Queen of Winnipeg, Coach Reg. Threl-

Victory's Cotter Pins

L/Cpl. H. W. Crockford

Tech Wing—fall in, attention, right turn, quick march—and just about that quickly and simply the recruit who was riding herd on the western plains a few days back, or drug store cowboying the passing parade in Toronto, is initiated into the wonders of the mechanized war. He gets very speedily to a hand-shaking friendship with varsol, motor oils, grease and grime. First and last parades, he finds, have little or no braided ceremony, but plenty of routine. After becoming an expert washer of trucks in the bargain, he is allowed the extreme privilege of manipulating one of His Majesty's vehicles. It is in "C" area, however, that they separate the gold and the dross. If you're lucky, and as a reward for having your brains shaken like a complex cocktail, and an all-round bruising of body and muscle, comes the big moment when the instructor says, "Okay" and your worth is shown literally in a 3rd class driver's certificate. Brother, that represents achievement.

From this point on the military course is one round of pleasure. It isn't until 6.00—er, 0600 hours, that the dear corporal pulls back the blankets and sends our hero spinning. Just a round of pleasure—D. and M., Gunnery, Tactics. Budding generals every one of 'em. Minor notes of discomfort, 'tis admitted. The generator doesn't generate; someone always forgets little items, like putting the transmission back in the tool box. Some of the lads have trouble gassing up their gas-operated muggies, and so it goes. Anyhow, at five—pardon, 1700 hours, John F. Recruit rushes to his private suite, dons his dinner clothes, and wonders at what night spot to spend the evening. After collecting a pass, he wanders around beautiful Barrie for hours, and wonders how people can be attracted and content in common, uninteresting civilian life.

But putting all nonsense to one side we of A-9 Tech Wing realize that we are not here through any love of Army or Camp Borden, nor any fondness for separation from our loved ones, but we are here because someone has dared to encroach upon the very foundation of our national and personal life, our freedom, and because we are not willing that innocent men women and children should suffer to satisfy one man's lust.

And so we grumble and grouch and groan, "it is our privilege, you know" but still we carry on. A mighty skyway baggage car goes zooming overhead, and we marvel at the achievement of the machine, and yet when analyzed we find it is a collection of small wheels, gadgets and pins which comprise its make-up, and as the success or failure of the flying wonder depends equally upon each minute wheel or pin so we would accept our responsibility and carry on. Cotter pins in the Machinery of Victory.

Gifts for "Her"



You'll find hundreds of things at Simpson's for women on your Christmas list! No matter what price you want to pay, you'll find something that's sure to please. For instance, a fob locket with your regimental crest, illustrated, at 2.50. Twisted 12-strand simulated pearl necklet, at 3.50. Glamor pins from \$1 up. Delightful boxed toiletries, gloves, perfumes, lingerie and dozens of other things from departments all over the store.

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C.A.C. WOMEN'S AUXILIARY

Greetings to the Canadian Armoured Corps from your Women's Auxiliary in Barrie. In spite of the comings and goings of the members throughout the year, this Auxiliary has steadily progressed and we'd like you all to know we're still on the job, only more so. A branch of the Canadian Armoured Corps Women's Auxiliary was started last summer in Toronto, of which Mrs. C. Churchill Mann is the President, and they find themselves very busy too. Our membership includes representatives from nearly a dozen different Units or detachments in the Armoured Corps, and we are sending overseas a steady flow of cigarettes to where they are most needed within the Corps. So far we've sent over close to 150,000 to the 1st Canadian Army Tank Bde., certain Reconnaissance Regiments and the 5th Canadian (Armoured) Division, and more going every month. We also try to keep our eye on the home front too. We have raised funds for these purposes, and had a few much appreciated donations, but we are specially indebted to the officers of A8 C.A.C. Officers' Mess for a very generous contribution towards our funds. We particularly value the confidence and goodwill indicated by this gesture.

We are planning a Christmas party for the children of twelve years and under of all men in uniform, and anticipate the co-operation of other branches of the Services at Camp Borden and that of the Lions and Kiwanis Clubs of Barrie, so that EVERYBODY will be there including Santa Claus, so be sure and see that the younger generation are at the Armouries in Barrie, on Saturday, December 20th from three to five o'clock.

In the meantime, for information to newcomers, this Auxiliary exists to be of service to all members of the Canadian Armoured Corps and their families. Regular monthly meetings are held in the Active Service Club in Barrie at 2.30 on the second Monday of every month, and working meetings every Monday at the same place. Wives of all personnel in the Armoured Corps are invited to come and will be most welcome.

To those we don't see on the 20th, and to all members of the Canadian Armoured Corps wherever they may be, we wish the very best of luck, a Merry Christmas and "good hunting" for the year 1942.

NOTE TO CONTRIBUTORS

Contributions to the news and views from A-9 will be welcomed. Address all communications to Asst.-Administrative Officer and drop in unit mail box. This is your paper and we want you to feel you have a part in it.

Have your bit of news in by the 15TH OF THE MONTH.



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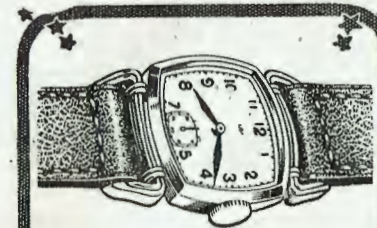
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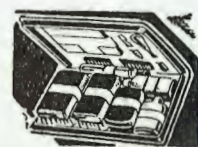
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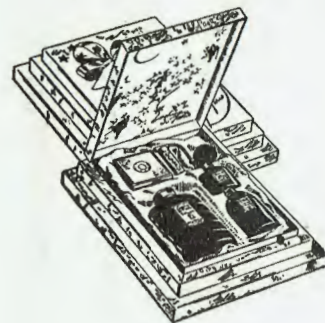
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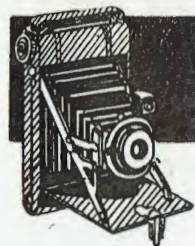
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DOUGLAS DRUGS

Tank Fighter Team

By **LIEUTENANT ROBERT M. GERARD***

Reprinted from "Infantry Journal"

PART TWO: THE BATTLE OF ROUEN

When the light of the Sunday of June 9 began to show itself, the Nth Groupe Franc was still in the suburb of Maronnes, prepared to receive the enemy with its machine guns and antitank guns. Early that day a motorcycle patrol and two armored cars were sent northeast to Mt. Aignan, in order to effect a better liaison with the infantry troops and the British anti-aircraft batteries we had seen there the day before. After an hour the patrol came back, reporting that all Allied troops had left during the night without our knowing anything about it. In fact, the patrol had seen a few German motorcyclists there.

We then tried to get in touch with division headquarters, for we wanted to know whether we should still try to defend Maronnes with our right flank exposed. The radio at the division CP made no answer. Accordingly, my captain ordered me to go by motorcycle to the CP, which was on the south side of the Seine, in Rouen itself. At the bridge I left the motorcycle to cross on foot. But first I had to lose fifteen minutes arguing with a captain who would not let me over without an official pass. In the middle of the most tremendous rout in the history of France, the average Frenchman still continued the routine of asking for papers, slips, requisitions. When I reached headquarters I found the place empty. But an orderly there said that headquarters had just been moved to the south but exactly where he did not know.

I went back to the bridge and found there a colonel from headquarters whom I had met before. He said that he had been charged by the division commander to organize the defense of the two Rouen bridges. The Groupe Franc, he said, must now move by echelons toward the bridges.

When my captain heard this he decided that we should try to get all our vehicles across to the south side of the Seine, and defend Rouen from that side. The Seine is an excellent antitank obstacle, 400 yards wide in many places.

But our first hard job was to convince the colonel that this was the best way to use our small "suicide" combat team, and a second big problem would be to end the traffic jam which was banked up against the closed bridge; this had to be done if our tanks and armored cars and trucks were to get across. I found that the colonel had a much different plan. His idea was for us to use our tanks to defend the Seine by operating on its north bank—the German bank. I suggested tactfully that in general the defense of a stream was generally made behind it, especially when the defending force is weak. But the colonel decided otherwise; we must defend in front of the bridges. The only thing he approved was the idea of getting all our non-combatant units and the supply, ammunition, kitchen,

and radio trucks across the river. This discussion took half an hour at least, and the defense preparations were still to be started. I came back to my unit and we began our movement back toward the bridges, keeping our tanks and armored cars to our rear flank to protect us against tank attack during the movement.

Then I spent another half hour arguing with both the colonel and the captain in charge of the bridges to let us have both bridges opened to traffic so that we could get across as soon as possible. Finally they agreed. It made me almost desperate to see such slowness in arriving at any decision when time saved meant life or death. It took one more hour for the traffic to flow on and over the bridges, until it was the turn of the Groupe Franc to cross. The captain in charge of the bridges only slowed things up further by trying to insist that our military vehicles be allowed to cross first, for there was practically a solid block of refugee cars ahead of us.

The Colonel also decided to put two of the four armored cars we still had left on the Pont Cormeille, the east bridge, as fixed forts! Moreover, he had a tank stay in place on the French side near the end of the bridge. This tank was in such a position that it could not even fire across the length of the bridge into the long street that led from the bridge to the north without great risk of hitting the armored cars or the antitank-gun crew at the north end of the bridge. And when the tank commander tried to move his tank to a better position the colonel stopped him. He was, so it seemed, trying to make every possible mistake in the shortest possible time. I do not think he was a fifth columnist, but he couldn't have done much better for the enemy if he had been.

But as a final compromise, the colonel ordered the two other armored cars to stay on the south side as a reserve, and decided to send only two of our tanks across to the north side of the river. But all four of our antitank guns had to be on the north bank. The two 47-mm. antitank guns were placed some distance ahead of the northern ends of the two bridges to fire down the two main streets in Rouen. The two 25-mm. antitank guns were placed near the bridges in the street along the north bank of the Seine, one by the east bridge (Pont Cormeille) covering the approach to the bridge from the east, and one in front of the west bridge (Pont de Pierre) covering the approach to the bridge from the west. The motorized infantry was also to be kept on the north side, and likewise the motorcycle detachment. I was able to get the sidecars of this detachment across to the south side, but the colonel absolutely refused to let me get the infantry trucks and the antitank-gun prime-movers across to the French side of the stream.

There was no time to dig in. We knew the Germans were approaching for the colonel had received information that the infantry unit sent to Boos to



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Tank Fighter Team

—Continued from Page 15

relieve us had been overrun by a German mechanized column. But the antitank-gun crews found enough sandbags to pile them up all around their guns. These sandbags were white, however, and so did a good job of advertising where the antitank guns were. It was necessary, to get any field of fire, to place the antitank guns right in the middle of the street. Thus, with their backs to the river, the crews were in effect being sacrificed by the colonel. On the south side their chances of being killed would have been less and they could have done a much more efficient job.

By now it was about 8:00 in the morning. A German observation plane circled around us, very slowly. We did not understand why the Luftwaffe was not already bombing us. Indeed, our whole situation there on the north side of the Seine seemed precarious. The two bridges had been previously mined, and at both ends of the bridges sandbag barricades had been installed. On the Pont Corneille only an opening was left in the barricade so that military traffic could pass. This opening could be quickly closed by moving an old Renault tank from the last war into the opening. But my captain and I were not at all certain that the French captain of engineers would wait for us before he blew up the bridges.

And so in view of all this we looked at the Seine together and wondered whether we could get back across it after the bridges were blown. The river seemed mighty wide, and we were not so sure we could make it by swimming without getting hit by German bullets. After a thorough search along our bank by a few of our infantrymen, they found an abandoned rowboat. It was rather plump and heavy. But it was nevertheless a rowboat. I put one of our Foreign Legion men on guard over the boat. I had picked this particular man, a tough Yugoslav, for one sound reason; I knew he did not know how to row!

About that time I was summoned by my captain in a hurry. He said that one of the tank commanders was pretty nervous, that he had been shaken up badly in the battle of the day before. It would be better if I took that tank and fought with it. I had been trained to use the Somua tank at the Saumur Cavalry School and had participated in several problems and manoeuvres. But now it was the real thing.

I figured my tank was to be sacrificed to fight on the north bank of the Seine. There was small hope of getting it back across after engaging the enemy. I checked my tank over and had all guns loaded, ready to fire. Then I found the commander of the other tank who was also the commander of the tank platoon. We decided that he with his tank would swing around to the rear of any German column that came down the streets of Rouen toward us, while I would attract the attention of the column from the front.

Suddenly, about 9:00, I heard a terrific noise. One of the antitank-gun crews had opened up, and we could also hear the shells from the German tanks in re-

turn. At once I headed my tank in the direction of the noise from a point near the banks of the Seine. As I did, the enemy's 88-mm. artillery which was apparently close behind their tanks began shelling the south bank of the Seine. The Germans undoubtedly thought we had established our defense on that bank. (They thought we were intelligent.) This was one time where doing the wrong thing helped, at least for a while.

I took my crew through side streets and was crossing the main road to the east bridge when I saw two German tanks coming down that long, straight street. I turned left toward them and stopped dead to fire with my 47-mm. gun at the leading tank. The French antitank-gun crew, farther away toward the bridge, ceased firing when they saw me heading toward the enemy. I missed my first shot, then zigzagged and advanced down the wide street, and then stopped and shot a second time. This time I got a direct hit on the turret of the German tank, but it still kept coming. I fired again and got a second hit, this time much lower, which disabled it. I was doing the firing myself, and my gunner was loading the 47-mm. gun as fast as he could.

Meanwhile, the other German tank was firing at me, but missed me twice; this one was still about 600 yards away. Advancing and zigzagging again, I made the mistake of firing a third shell at the tank I had already disabled. But I wanted to be sure to put the tank completely out of action.

Then I turned my turret toward the second German tank. The turret on the French Somua is power-driven and turns easily. As it turned I heard the definite whiz of an antitank shell passing close. I fired and missed the second German tank. And just as the gunner was loading my gun, my tank was terribly shaken by a hit—a hit with a 77-mm. shell from the German tank, which passed several inches below my feet and got, I think, my transmission. Nobody was wounded.

The driver tried the shifts forward. First gear did not work, second gear did not work, nor did any of the five forward speeds! There we were, apparently stuck and helpless, while the German had stopped firing, probably thinking he had killed the crew inside.

There was no hope of getting out of the tank, even through the escape trap, without being killed by the bullets of the enemy's machine guns. But then my driver thought of trying to back the tank, and the reverse gear worked, though with an awful noise. The tank moved slowly backwards, and painfully. But now the German tank, seeing that we moved again, resumed its fire at us. He wasn't much of a gunner, for he missed us again. The side of the street out of which we had come into the main street was too far back for us to have any hope of reaching before being hit by the German gun. There was only one thing to do—back the tank into a building.

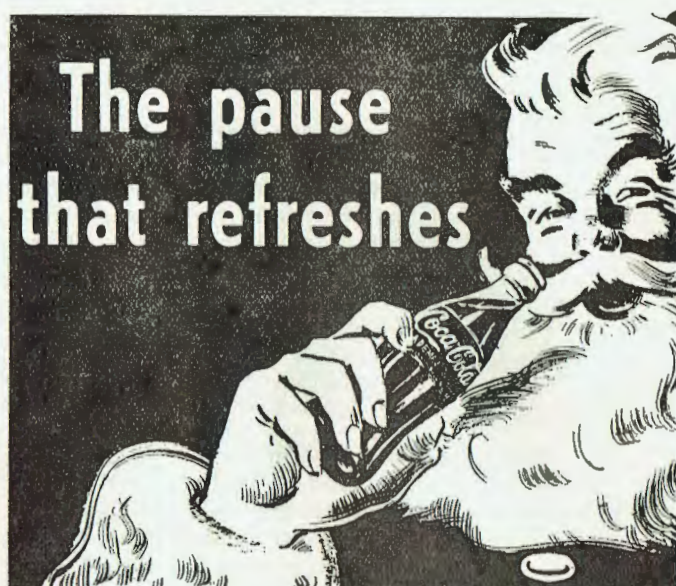
I fired again at the German tank and missed it. I was just as poor a gunner as he was. Then we crashed backwards through a shop window and found ourselves in the middle of a grocery store, surrounded by empty shelves. Now we were sheltered from the antitank gun and machine guns of the German tank. But

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—Continued from Page 17

as we crawled out of our disabled tank, we could hear the enemy roaring down the street toward us.

Our position was rapidly becoming dangerous again. But luckily the brave antitank-gun crew guarding the bridge approach picked up its fire again, and apparently it destroyed the German tank for the noise of its approach suddenly stopped.

Just the same, there was no time to lose; we had to get out of there. But first I had to blow up my tank. I did not want the enemy to get a single piece of our equipment, even just badly damaged. I always carried for this purpose in my right-hand pocket two small petards de cavalerie, small sticks of dynamite. And in my left pocket I had the two fuses. These had to be set very carefully, without too much friction; otherwise the whole thing would explode. We put one stick of dynamite in the chamber of our 47-mm. gun, and another inside the tank, on the floor. Then we lighted the two fuses and headed fast for the back garden of the grocery shop. Exactly ninety seconds later we heard the detonation: our tank was blown up.

At the back of the garden we had to climb over a wall, then over another into another back yard. We walked through it. We found ourselves in a small side street with no enemy in sight.

We ran full speed toward the river and there I found my captain and reported what had happened. He bawled me out in most severe terms for doing a poor job. He was right. My tank had been destroyed and I had only put one German tank out of commission. This was a big blow to our Groupe Franc. For now we had only three tanks left.

By now more and more German tanks were coming toward our defensive area and shelling the antitank-gun positions as they came. All the while German artillery, on the hills surrounding the city, kept pounding on the south side of the Seine behind us. From what I saw and from the information I gathered later from the different platoons of the Groupe Franc, the enemy had about ten light tanks of the PzKw II type (10 tons, crew of 3, 15-mm. armor, armament one 20-mm. antitank gun and one light machine gun, maximum speed 28 miles), and nearly 50 medium tanks of the PzKw IV type (weight 22 tons, crew of 5, 43-mm. armor, armament one 77-mm. antitank gun and two light machine guns, maximum speed 25 miles per hour). It was one of those PzKw IV's that put my tank out of commission.

In a city, tanks are naturally canalized by the buildings and easier to destroy. In order to limit to the minimum their chances of being hit, the German tanks adopted very interesting tactics. As I have said, the approaches to the bridges and our defenses ran north and south. The enemy tanks kept mainly on streets running east-west, and simply stopped for one or two seconds to fire every time they crossed the main street under fire of our antitank gun. Each time, they

would fire one shell at the antitank gun defending a bridge, and then move full speed to the other bridge-approach street, and do the same thing against the antitank gun defending that bridge. Then they would go on across that street and turn south in a small street, thus gaining a street one block nearer to us, and then repeat the same procedure in the other direction. This gave our French antitank-gun crews only a brief glimpse of several German tanks crossing the main bridge-approach streets from east or west and at different ranges. It was no great wonder that our gun crews could not take care of them all; there were too many.

A few men at a time, the men of the antitank-gun crews were killed or wounded. New men came crawling towards the guns to take the place of their comrades and the guns kept steadily firing. In the course of the whole hard fight those two antitank guns destroyed fifteen German tanks for certain, and probably more. But the enemy was willing to take his losses, and kept on crossing the two main streets with his tanks and getting closer every time.

Every time the German tanks crossed the two main streets, they would fire not only high-explosive shells, but also their machine guns to keep new men from relieving the antitank-gun crews and also to prevent the crews from retreating over the bridges. Several of our infantrymen were killed bringing ammunition to their comrades of the antitank guns. Here was splendid example of co-operation and sacrifice for the men of another branch of the service—a thing that is only possible in a well-integrated combat team but utterly necessary in modern war. Other infantrymen had installed their machine guns in buildings along the main streets and kept firing at the German tanks with armor-piercing bullets, but with little effect.

Finally, as the situation grew tight, my captain ordered me to cross the bridge and organize the defense of the south of the Seine with what was left of the Groupe Franc. He decided to keep the rowboat for himself and the last men over. As long as the bridges were standing there was little point in using the boat except that the bridges were under machine-gun fire at frequent intervals. I wondered just how I could be able to cross it with such machine-gun fire upon it. But it had to be done. I went into one of the buildings near the bridge to see the infantry platoon commander. He refused to cross the bridge with me saying he would cross later. He had a glimpse of a few German motorcycles in the distance and wanted first to have a crack at them when they got closer. I couldn't find our own platoon; they were somewhere in some other buildings.

I came back to my captain and reported that the infantrymen wanted to stay. He looked pleased to know that his men had such guts, but ordered me to cross the bridge just the same and draw a sketch of the other side, indicating how we could defend it to best advantage. The infantrymen would follow me in a few minutes, he said. I never saw the infantry-platoon commander again.

With the two other men of my tank crew and five

One Way to Get There

A true story of how two boys of an Ontario tank regiment wangled their way to England, despite the fact that they had been left behind in Camp Borden when their Regiment sailed for over-there.

(Reported by Tpr. Jack Baines, A-9 C.A.C. (A) T.C.)

Determined to be in the forefront of Canada's overseas line of defense, and yearning for the comradeship of the fellows they had known in civilian life, and soldiered with, led two young soldiers of a well-known unit into a stirring adventure—winning the admiration of their unit, comrades, and many people in England who heard their story.

Left behind in A-9 C.A.C. (A) T.C. for a course when their unit sailed for overseas, these boys were downcast. Feeling that they had been shelved they determined to be with their pals. Quietly stealing away one night, they worked their way to Halifax. On arriving they found that crews, especially A.A. gunners, were needed on many of the merchant ships there, and found no trouble in signing on as A.A. gunners on a Norwegian ship bound for England. They left one day behind their unit—but—it was many more days, one month to be exact, after being buffeted about on the high seas before they were to parade with their unit again.

Of course they had been naughty boys, and had to suffer the consequences of their disregard of military procedure. However their commanding officer was not too severe with them and to-day they are getting along well with the unit they had risked so much in which to serve.

The young adventurers had fifty pounds to their credit on arrival in London and it does not need a lot of guessing as to the use they made of it before reporting to the regimental brig.

Hats off to Troopers E. Owles and J. Fairborn.

* * *

Convoy on the 30 Yard Line

—Continued from page 9

fall, the other Bomber team members and many Winnipeg fans.

With this final gesture which will enshrine that convoy exercise in the hearts of the "Recces." forever, they pulled out for Borden waving and cheering good-bye to their home town team.

Not even a wrong turn marred the return journey and now after this, their first convoy, a clean report could be made. They reached camp tired and hungry, with faces red from the beatings of a cold wind. But all agreed with enthusiasm that it had been an excellent scheme, and that they would never forget the luck that let them be in Toronto when the Blue Bombers were there.

The following Monday the regiment received the actual ball the Bombers carried to victory for the West and Winnipeg. It was autographed by the team and it will occupy a haloed niche in the "Recces." barracks.

WIRELESS WING: ii Wii

—Continued from page 5

sonnel, and presented a series of problems designed to keep the most optimistic of O.C.'s on the verge of occasional pessimism.

Possibly the biggest single factor that has made so many improvements possible is the fact that our new wing enables complete administrative unity, as all lecture rooms, workshops and offices are incorporated in a single building. (Thanks to the co-operation of Major Childs.)

One lecture room has been set aside for the use of practical R/T instruction. Another for instruction in lamp reception, where a unique device of Capt. Bashaw's has been brought into effect. A third room contains more wireless sets than the writer imagined he would ever have the pleasure of seeing assembled in one spot, all drawing their power supply from conveniently located wall-plugs, thanks to the specially built-in D.C. cable from the battery room. Here budding wireless operators can tune wireless sets to their heart's content. A fourth room has been fitted up as a modern morse code operating room with a capacity for teaching sixty candidates.

Close liaison with the Tactics Wing has been established resulting in a number of mutual benefits.

An Armoured Command Vehicle has been secured to enable more efficient control and monitoring of outdoor wireless exercises, and it is hoped that in the near future, student D.R.'s from the D. & M. Wing can work in with these schemes which would be valuable experience for everyone.

With regard to teaching personnel, several instructors were "kidnapped" from the 5th Armoured "Divie Sigs" and our acting wing C.S.M. S/Sgt. Keeler, stolen from the Training Centre.

Now that the Wing is recovering from the initial shock of all these sudden changes, everything is running on well-oiled wheels and, all in all, Capt. "EHK" seems fairly happy about the whole thing.

Come in and see us sometime.



Tank Fighter Team

—Continued from Page 19

or six others of the Groupe Franc, I crawled toward the bridge. By now the whole city was an inferno. The big oil tanks along the south side of the river in the western part of the city were being blown up and set afire by the French and from there we could hear tremendous explosions. Flames from the oil tanks leapt high in the air and gave off masses of black smoke. The noise of firing was terrific all around. Oil was flowing into the Seine. If the bridges were blown out now, how would our troops be able to swim in that gluey mess?

We kept crawling slowly ahead. We passed close to the antitank gun and I had a swift glimpse of the pile of wounded and dead around it. At that moment a German tank crossed the main street from right to left, stopped to fire down the middle of the street, but was behind another enemy tank that had been disabled by our antitank gun. This blown-up tank made fine cover for the German tank now firing.

A shell from the tank burst very close and slightly wounded the man behind me in the arm, but he decided to keep on across the bridge with me just the same. The German artillery, probably realizing by now that our defense was on the north side of the Seine, and not on the south side, began shortening its range. A few shells fell into the Seine itself, and then a few on the north bank behind me. These hit very near the place where I knew my captain was. Our Groupe Franc was getting a heavier dose than ever.

Now we started across the bridge, the men following me. We had some slight cover from the few sandbags at the north end of the bridge now behind us. We crawled, very slowly, and as flat as we could. Every time a German tank crossed the main street back there beyond the bridge, the bullets from its machine guns whistled only a few inches above us. At the Saumur Cavalry School my instructor had always had a terrible time to make us really crawl. I was doing it now to perfection.

Just as we reached the middle of the bridge I heard a great explosion and in amazement saw the east bridge go up in the air. The colonel in charge of our sector had blown up the bridge without any warning—without even removing two armoured cars stationed upon it. He had, so to speak, killed my friends. My instinctive reaction was that he might well give the same order for the bridge we ourselves were on. And so I decided to reach the south end of the bridge at full speed. Forgetting the machine-gun bullets, I stood up and ran as fast as I could. I signalled my men to follow, but they did not, and shouted that I should stay down, that I would get killed. Machine-gun bullets began to whistle again close by my ears. I literally threw myself on the bridge and began to pull myself on my stomach so that I could begin another rush from a different point. I had learned to do that again and again at the school and had hated the hard, gruelling practice. But I was doing it to save my life. As soon as the enemy machine guns stopped I stood up and ran again, this time a little

longer, until again I could hear the bullets coming near me. And at last, in this manner, I reached a pillar of the bridge at the south side of the Seine.

At that moment came a tremendous blast and I felt myself hurled into the air. I landed on hands and face about twenty feet away. I still didn't know what had actually happened, when a great block of stone crashed on the ground a yard from my head. It was a part of the bridge I had just crossed on. I put my arms around my face and stayed flat and motionless. Other parts of the bridge were coming down but they were smaller chunks and had gone higher in the air. None of them hit me, but they came plenty close enough. Finally thousands of tiny fragments of the bridge came down upon me, making toc-toc-toc noises on my steel helmet. I wasn't hurt, only a few bruises. I looked behind me. The bridge was gone and so were my men. The antitank guns on the other side were silent now, probably destroyed. The good colonel had blown everything up nicely.

But the enemy tanks kept firing from across the river. I made a dash toward the first side street to reach cover from the fire. I found the south bank completely deserted. I decided to go to the public park south of the city where our trucks had been camouflaged. About then a few Stukas came over flying low and heading toward the south. Then I heard explosions at some distance. Could those planes be bombing our trucks? I tore toward the park, only a bit lame from what I had been through.

When I got there I found two trucks in flames. One was the telephone truck, the other the artillery heavy-ammunition truck, and it was now a dangerous thing. Shell after shell from it kept exploding, then a case of small-caliber cartridges like a string of fire-crackers. The drivers had already had a chance to move the other trucks far enough away to avoid any danger and were all admiring the free show! The other trucks had not been hit because they were under the trees and well apart from each other. The men told me that this was the first bombing in that part of town for a long time.

We could not conceive that the enemy would know just where the trucks had been parked and hidden without information from some fifth columnist. They had been well camouflaged, under big trees with thick foliage, and could hardly be seen from the air.

I left a few men to guard the vehicles and took all the other drivers, radiomen, telephone men, mechanics, and cooks, about thirty in all, packed them in sidecars of the motorcycle detachment, and headed back toward the Seine. Each man had a rifle, and we could at least prevent the enemy for a while from crossing the Seine on small rubber boats.

When we reached the Seine again to my surprise and pleasure I found my captain there with the commander of the motorcycle detachment and his motorcyclists. They had just crossed the river in the row-boat bringing the detachment over in two trips. One of the motorcyclists was now rowing back from the

Tank Fighter Team

—Continued from Page 21

German side on the third trip and had several infantrymen in the boat. A few enemy motorcyclists arrived just then along the shore and opened on the rowboat with their light machine guns. Some of the men in the boat were killed, others wounded, and the rest of our infantrymen were now trapped in Rouen on the German side of the Seine. All four antitank guns had been destroyed. But from the accounts of the men from the motorcycle detachment, there were several survivors of the antitank crews still over there on the north side.

The two armoured cars we had left had not gone into action; they had been kept in reserve. We found them now in a back street, waiting for orders from the colonel. But no sign of the colonel. At that same time the two tanks we had in reserve appeared. The commander of the tank the colonel had put at the south end of the east bridge said that he had not been able to fire a single shot for fear of killing our own men, who were in his line of fire on the enemy's tanks across the river. He decidedly confirmed the fact that the two armoured cars on the bridge had not been warned, and were blown up with the bridge. After the blowing up of the bridge, said this tank commander, the colonel left for the south, apparently badly shaken. The tank commander, with the bridge gone, had been able to fire a few shots at German tanks. These tanks then disappeared altogether from the main street and his field of fire. When a few German motorcycles had appeared along the north bank to the east, the tank commander fired at them, probably wounding one or two. The others had left the bank at once. Since then the tank commander had seen no more of the enemy.

My captain came to a decision swiftly. It was a relief for us to know that he was now in complete command and that no elderly colonel, without knowledge of modern war, was superimposed over him any more. Two patrols of one armoured car and a motorcycle squad each were now sent along the south shore of the Seine, one west and the other east. Our two tanks were kept behind as a mobile reserve. The mission of the small patrols was to observe along the banks of the Seine, fire at the enemy if they saw them, and keep them from crossing. The patrols were not to go more than five or six miles out from the city, and were to come back again to report. Meanwhile, the motorcycle detachment, dismounted, would stay near the destroyed bridges, observe, and fire with its six light machine guns at any Germans seen. We found a few sandbags around and used them to protect the machine-gun crews.

The German side of the Seine was now silent. Not an enemy man or tank in sight. But suddenly we heard firing—from a building on the south side, supposedly our own French side—somebody was firing at us from the rear. I had just time to run through a door into a nearby house to avoid the bullets. I then turned and shot at the windows of the building from which the firing was coming with my revolver. Two of our machine guns opened fire on the building too.

Finally a motorcycle squad got into the building but found no one. But the fifth columnists had left a lot of small-arms ammunition in their haste.

By a stroke of luck, a little later on one of our men found an abandoned French 75-mm. gun in a small shack on the bank of the river. It had been so well camouflaged that none of us had seen it before. All around it plenty of shells were piled. My captain immediately decided to put the old gun to use. The emplacement for the gun nearby was excellent for we could fire pointblank at the other bank, and especially well at the point where the main street joined the river, right at the approach of the destroyed west bridge. My captain and I stayed near the gun, ready to fire. A few minutes later a tank appeared moving along the streets on the German side.

The motorcycle detachment held the fire of its machine guns. No use wasting ammunition against a tank. Then another tank appeared, going slowly and carefully, then a few motorcycles. We waited a minute more, then fired practically pointblank across the river at the tank and hit it. The range was only 400 yards and this first round set the tank on fire. Then our machine guns fired at the motorcycles.

The noise of a 75 is characteristic. When the Germans heard it they probably figured that a whole battery was facing them. They left the Seine as fast as they could move.

One of the houses on the German side began to burn, probably from our shelling. This building set the next afire, and soon the whole small area by the bridge approaches was in flames. I later read that the Germans had bombed this area. It would be more correct to say that my captain and I were responsible, not the bombs of the Germans.

Then my captain got a new idea. "Let's make a lot of noise, so the Germans will think that we're more powerful than we are, and maybe they won't try to cross for the rest of the day." By next day perhaps we could get some help from division headquarters, and hold on a little longer. Neither my captain nor I knew much about firing a 75, but we didn't do so badly. We simply guessed at elevations and deflections, and we could see the impact of our shells along the hills beyond the northern part of the city. German batteries fired back and shelled us accurately. It began to get uncomfortable but we kept on until our ammunition was practically exhausted. We knew that the enemy blitzkrieg tactics avoided the strong-points in the enemy lines. We hoped to create the impression of a strong point where we were. Whether the Germans were fooled or not, they never once tried to cross the river Seine at Rouen.

Along about 1.00 in the afternoon, a motorcycle scout sent by division headquarters came with an order for us to retreat, and defend a new position from La Bouille on the Seine in the west to Elbeuf on the Seine in the east. Around Rouen the river makes a big loop and Rouen is exactly at the top of the loop, with La Bouille and Elbeuf on the two sides at the bottom of the loop. By establishing this a line, our front would be greatly shortened. The division commander, however, had overlooked one fact. By aban-

doning Rouen, we left the Germans free to establish a bridgehead there, unmolested, and to pour all their armored equipment upon us from there. We would have much preferred to stay along the Seine, even though it meant some ten more miles of front. At least we would know what was going on, and whether or not the enemy was attempting a crossing.

So we left Rouen reluctantly, and established our own headquarters at St. Ouen, between Elbeuf and La Bouille. On the road to St. Ouen, we were bombed and machine-gunned by Stukas, and lost three sidecars.

At La Bouille, where the river was very narrow and the Germans might attempt a crossing, we found about fifty British. At Elbeuf we discovered many refugees and some French infantry units in full flight. A little north of St. Ouen, we came across what was left of an infantry battalion. The battalion commander, a rather young and energetic lieutenant colonel, had decided to stay and fight. Since there was no sign of the enemy and no indication that the enemy would attempt a crossing that afternoon, we decided to give the survivors of the Groupe Franc a well-earned rest.

I was practically exhausted myself but my captain called me and the commander of the motorcycle detachment for a small conference to talk over the means left at our disposal. In those few hours of fighting, our Groupe Franc had taken a terrific mauling. And the one main reason was we had fought on the north side of the Seine instead of defending from its south bank.

What we had left was just a ghost of what we had been. We still had two tanks and two armored cars, the motorcycle detachment with fifteen sidecars, plus three gasoline trucks, two ammunition trucks, and the kitchen, maintenance, radio and supply trucks. Out of approximately 220 men at the beginning of the Battle of Rouen, we had 90 left. But only half of these were combatant troops. Of our eight officers only three were left. The situation was not so good.

As soon as we finished sizing up the situation, my captain sent me by sidecar to Pont de l'Arche, on the Seine, fifteen miles to the east, to see whether the Mth Groupe Franc was still around there. All we knew was that it had been in Igoville the night before. Igoville was just a few miles north of Pont de l'Arche, on the German side of the Seine. If the enemy had already crossed at Pont de l'Arche, I was to return as fast as I could. If I found the other Groupe Franc, I was to bring back all the information they had.

I started for Pont de l'Arche with my private driver, a motorcycle racer in civilian life. The only armament we had was my own revolver, and my driver's rifle. We crossed through Elbeuf like a streak, cutting our way through the refugees. But beyond Elbeuf we saw no one.

For the first time that day I really relaxed. The wind felt good and kept me awake. We were not on the road to Pont de l'Arche that follows the Seine,

which was too exposed, but on a roughly parallel route farther back from the river. This route turned left toward Pont de l'Arche just before reaching Louviers. But soon, in an opening in the forest we came to a battery of 155-mm. guns. The battery had been left alone there with no protection. But apparently they were not worried. They were singing as they camouflaged their guns very carefully, and were preparing to fire at targets on the other side of the river.

By then the road was sloping gently toward the banks of the river. We could see the hills on the German side a few miles beyond the river. If the enemy is there, I thought, he has a perfect view of this road. I ordered my driver to go even faster.

We found the village completely deserted. No sign at all of the other Groupe Franc. I got out of my sidecar and crawled toward the Seine. The bridge was blown but no enemy in sight. The Germans could have crossed, at that time, unmolested. And why they did not I still do not know. Probably the advanced units of the German panzer division were too far ahead of their other troops.

Just then I heard noise of motors and rumblings of trucks behind me on my own side of the Seine. A German column? I hurried toward the central square of the village, where I had left my sidecar. From there I could see coming down the road I had followed myself a long French column of dragons portes (motorized troops) sent to take up a position near Pont de l'Arche, along the Seine. Then I suddenly heard the whistling of 88-mm. shells from across the Seine, and I could see that their targets were the first vehicles in the French column. The Germans could not have had a better target. They had an unobstructed view, the road was straight, and on both sides of it were thick woods, into which the half-tracks of the dragons portes could not expect to penetrate. The battalion commander had made the mistake of having his whole battalion advance on this dangerous stretch at the same time, instead of using small movements of a platoon at a time.

What I saw then was the terribly destructive effect of an accurately placed artillery concentration on a motorized column, and how helpless such a column is under such fire. First the column tried to speed up to get down to the village where the vehicles could turn left or right into the streets for cover. But as truck after truck was hit, the road was finally blocked, and the rest of the column could not move at all.

The French battalion then abandoned the idea of saving their vehicles. Men dashed from the trucks to find cover in the woods. But the enemy's shelling grew heavier. Shells killed troops as they tried to get out of their vehicles. And the German artillery opened their fire to include the woods on each side of the road.

Then a shell burst near me down in the village, but did not injure me or my driver because we were flat on the ground. I was no longer a spectator now. We ran to the shell hole and kept down in it.

Tank Fighter Team

—Continued from Page 23

After about thirty minutes the shelling stopped for a short while but picked up again for ten or fifteen minutes more. But now the French artillery began to pound the German side and silenced the German battery.

I had left my motorcycle in a garage on the main square of the town. This was almost the only building around that square still standing. The back of the garage had been demolished, but my motorcycle was OK. I decided to leave as fast as I could. But first I talked to a few of the officers of the motorized unit who were still alive and was happy to find there one of my instructors in antitank defense at Saumur. None of the officers had expected the Germans to be already on the other side of the Seine. I finally left Pont de l'Arche, taking a small dirt road back to the east. I didn't want the enemy to repeat his show just for my sidecar.

We were travelling along this road at good speed when we came upon a clearing, with only big trees a short distance apart along the sides of the road. At that moment I heard the droning of a plane coming close. I looked up and saw a lone German bomber heading toward us. For a German bomber to spend his time and ammunition in attacking a single sidecar on a road seemed pure sadism, the pleasure of killing for killing. We ran off the road and took cover in the ditch along it. Evidently the enemy flyer was returning from a mission, and had used all his bombs, for he didn't drop any. He just machine-gunned us, circling and diving to get as good aim as possible. Now my driver and I hugged close to the trunk of sizeable trees, he on one side of the road and I on the other. As the plane circled, so did we around our big trees.

It seems funny now, but it was deadly serious then. And our careful timing in moving around like squirrels was the only thing that saved us.

Finally the enemy pilot gave up and soared away. Our motorcycle had one flat tire from a bullet, so we had to change it. The sidecar itself was riddled with bullets.

When we got back to the Groupe Franc headquarters, I thought I could relax for a while and sleep. But not this time either. The captain had received an order from division headquarters to move us at full speed to Bourgheroulde, a small town about six miles to the west. The captain directed me to prepare everything for the move.

But as we began to pull out from under the apple trees under which the vehicles had been camouflaged, seventeen enemy planes appeared. We hit the ditches. The Germans dropped about a dozen bombs, not from a dive, but from a straight low flight. One bomb fell near me in the middle of the road, but all its fragments passed over my head. I was only spattered thoroughly with mud. The bomb was a very small one; the hole it made was only about two feet deep in the road. It did, however, kill several refugees not far away.

We were almost untouched by this bombing, and as soon as it stopped went on to Bourgheroulde, where we found part of the town in flames from an attack by the same enemy bombers. Remnants of the French Army and refugees kept pouring into the place, all going south. We had to work extremely hard to prevent a bad traffic jam from developing. The refugees and British and French troops were also looting stores. This didn't help our preparations for the defense of the village either. For these and other reasons we definitely didn't like the place.

(To be continued)

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