

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Richard Duchossois

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Veterans Remember Oral History project

Interview # VR2-A-L-2015-048

Richard (Dick) Duchossois, Tank Destroyer company commander whose unit fought its way across northern France and into Germany during WW II, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Veterans Remember* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Oct 19 & 20, 2015

Location: Mr. Duchossois's office at Arlington International Racecourse

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, Director of Oral History, ALPL

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Transcript
being processed

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:59 + 2:01 / 1.98 + 2.02 = 4 hrs.

Session 1: High school and college years, military training & combat in France

Session 2: Combat in France & Germany, occupation duty and return to civilian life

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on December 9, 2015.

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Abstract

Richard (Dick) Duchossois, *Veterans Remember*, VR2-A-L-2015-048

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Richard (Dick) Duchossois was born on October 7, 1921 in Chicago, Illinois, and grew up in the Beverly neighborhood on the southwest side of the city. He attended high school at Morgan Park Military Academy, and by virtue of that experience and summer military training, he was eligible to receive an officer's commission in the U.S. Army Reserve. In the fall of 1940 he began college at Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Kentucky. In January, 1942, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, he was notified that he was now commissioned as a second lieutenant in the infantry, and was to report for duty at Camp Robinson in Little Rock, Arkansas. Three days later he was assigned to the 610th tank destroyer battalion, a new unit at Camp Hood, Texas. In fact, tank destroyer units were also new to the army, and Lieutenant Duchossois was on the ground floor as the army developed tactics for how to use the units in combat. He was soon appointed to command Company C of the 610th. After a series of training schools and exercises around the United States, the 610th was shipped to England in the spring of 1944, landing in Scotland before heading south.

Captain Duchossois and the 610th crossed the channel on July 31 and landed on Utah Beach. The unit was initially assigned to the 1st Army, but following the expansion of the beachhead and the arrival of General Patton's 3rd Army, the 610th was attached to that army's 80th division, and saw its first heavy combat at Argentan, France, the southern 'gate' of the Falaise Pocket. Much of the Wehrmacht's Army Group B was subsequently destroyed west of the Seine River. The 610th sped across France, usually attached to the 80th Infantry Division, and in early September was ordered to stop at the Moselle River while all supplies were being sent north to General Bernard Montgomery's command (British and American). There was little resistance at the time they reached the Moselle River, but approximately ten days later, after crossing the Moselle River, the Germans were resisting with all of their forces. Duchossois was wounded by enemy small arms fire, and was evacuated to the rear. He was hospitalized in Paris until early December when members of his unit arrived at the hospital and took him back to the front. In late December and early January the 610th, again attached to the 80th Division, helped hold the southern shoulder of the Bulge, and was later transferred south again. They crossed the Rhine River at Worms, Germany on March 29, 1945, and quickly drove into the heart of Germany toward Munich. In the months following the German surrender on May 8, Captain Duchossois served as the military governor for the region of Kreis Eichstätt while he awaited the arrival of the army's occupation units to assume that mission.

Duchossois returned to the United States as a major in late 1945, and was discharged in late March of 1946. By that time, he was working at his father-in-law's business, Thrall Car Manufacturing Company. Duchossois went on to become a very successful businessman in his own right, and by the mid-1980s, his business interests including ownership of the Arlington International Racecourse in Arlington Heights, Illinois along with the parent company, Duchossois Industries.

Subject Headings/Key Words: 610th Tank Destroyer Battalion; tank destroyer tactics during World War II; combat at Falaise Gap/Argentan; Battle of the Bulge; General George Patton; Morgan Park Military Academy; Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Kentucky; 80th Infantry Division; combat at Moselle River; occupation duty in post-war Germany; Thrall Car; post-war Kreis Eichstätt

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