

Maynard Adolphson

106th Infantry Division

May 9, 2005 - War's end meant family reunion and better food for ex-POWs

As momentous as it was for all concerned, V-E Day was especially memorable for two current residents of the Rock River Valley, both of whom, coincidentally, will turn 82 next month.

Maynard Adolphson arrived by train around noon that day at the Illinois Central depot on South Main Street after having spent more than three months in a German prison camp. His fiancé, Joan Hatcher, was there with his parents to welcome him.

His memory of the occasion these 60 years later is simple. "I just wanted to go home and get some of my mother's good cooking," he said recently.

Adolphson had lost 50 pounds on a skimpy diet in captivity. "We got one bowl of soup a day and a ration of bread. The bread was 25 percent wood shavings. It was sawdust. The Germans didn't have enough to feed themselves, much less the prisoners."

Adolphson had been a member of the first graduating class at East High School in 1941 and went to work at Woodward Governor in Loves Park the day after he got out of school. He was drafted in 1943, served in the Army's [106th Infantry Division](#), fought in the Battle of the Bulge and ended up in the notorious prison camp at Bad Orb, Germany, not far from Frankfurt.

He was so overjoyed at seeing his parents and his wife-to-be at the train station on V-E Day that he hardly noticed the lack of celebration on Rockford's streets.

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