

Well I hope that I can continue the letter without too much interruption. Last night we moved at 9 PM and arrived in the new area at 11:30. It was pitch dark and since we now sleep in pup tents my first move was to find a site for the tent and then to pitch it and get my stuff and myself in it and go to bed. It is quite a job to find an area for a pup tent in pitch dark. You have to make sure that you are away from any area that a vehicle might travel, otherwise you might get run over. So far in these maneuvers we have seen two casualties caused by this type of occurrence. In each case a jeep ran over a man who was sleeping in a slit trench, the one wheel of the jeep dropping into the trench sufficiently deep to fall on the man, but not deep enough to hurt him seriously. Next, the ground should be smooth enough to make for fairly comfortable sleeping. That means no roots or stumps must be present, as well as no other irregularities of the surface of the ground. Then in selecting the site you must be careful that you don't stick a twig from a tree branch into your eye (these are very common injuries, with frequent corneal ulcerations resulting) but fortunately since I wear glasses this is not such a danger. Once the area is selected then the job is to pitch the tent in the pitch darkness. No flashlights or matches are permitted on these maneuvers, and the moon doesn't come up until 3 or 4 AM. In pitching the tent it is necessary to pitch it high enough so that one can sit upright in the center of the tent, and the sides must be pulled taut and pegged down. Then in order to keep any run from running in it is necessary to dig a small trench all the way around the tent to run off the water as it flows from the ground or from the sides of the tent. Since we carry our equipment with us and place it in the tent this becomes important, for rain would wreak havoc with our barracks bag. Once all this is done we must place our bedding roll in proper position so that the bottom won't stick out of the tent, and the top won't be too far up in the tent, otherwise the tent rests on your face and keeps you from sleeping. It must also be placed properly in the tent so that you can get all your equipment in the tent without inconveniencing your position for sleep. Finally when all this is done you are ready to go to sleep, or if you should want to read, you have to cover over the opening at the front of the tent with an opaque material, eg. a blanket, and then light a candle and read by its light. To protect yourself from mosquitos we use a mosquito net which is fixed on a wooden peg upright with a crossbar and thus hangs down all around you, enclosing you as if you were lying in a box whose walls were made of mosquito netting. To keep out snakes and insects we dig a small trough all the way around where the net touches the ground, and then cover the edge of the net with soil, etc. where it strikes in the trough. How would you guys like to be a field soldier.

There has been much furor in our medical battalion recently, resulting in numerous changes. The whole situation was precipitated by an anti-semitic group. It is a long story which I shall try to tell you in essence. It seems that this clique existed for quite some time while we were at Shelby, but I was totally oblivious to it because I went home every night and consequently had very little social contact with the fellows. I had noticed that the gentile boys in the battalion as a group were very heavy drinkers, and that the Jewish fellows did not drink at all, but this had never meant anything more to me than just that. About 3 months ago the colonel, who is Jewish, placed Enright, one of the ringleaders of this group, in charge of our clearing company and he immediately formed a clique with the gentiles in our company, to the total exclusion of the Jews. This clique slept in a tent by itself, drinking almost constantly, sometimes not coming out of the tent for days, except when the company moved. All the duties were delegated to the Jewish officers, and nothing which we did was ever right. The situation became almost unbearable. The colonel was informed of this situation by one of the lieutenants who was a personal friend of his, but he refused to interfere with the company as long as it was functioning as well as it had been. So things rode along like that for a while. Last week, an inspector from the third army came around to inspect us. It happened to be a day when we were having a break, and as usual the clique had drunk especially heavy before the break, having an old style drinking party wherein you drink until you fall asleep. The inspector wanted someone with some responsibility in the company to accompany him on his tour of inspection, so one of the enlisted men was sent over to get the company commander. When he did not show up in a little while, I went over to again warn him that the inspector was awaiting him. I found him a little the worse for wear and delivered the

message. He was very bitter about being inspected in the break, and at first refused to come out to see the inspector, and then apparently thinking better of it decided to complete his dressing and then come out. ~~Be~~ Be that as it may, he did not come out, and the inspector finally tired of waiting for him and decided to go around without him. He then asked for a platoon leader, but one of these was in town, and the other was too far gone to ever face an inspector, so one of the other officers had to go around with him. He was pretty angry by this time, and really gave our outfit the works. He found everything wrong, and he and the colonel, who came up a little later, really had it out with one another. The inspector learned that Enright, the leader of the clique, was not the senior officer in the battalion, in fact he is the junior of all the captains, and yet had been given the job entitled to be held by the senior officer. In his report he brought this out, and the next day the colonel was called up on the carpet by the general and told to follow the old army rule of seniority rather than promotion by merit. So the colonel had to demote Enright. This started a hot controversy with the result that the entire clique is being broken up. 2 of the officers have already been sent out to an armored division, and Enright is due to go next. This leaves only one more outspoken antisemite who will also be transferred in the near future. The funny thing about the whole situation is that the colonel, altho a Jew himself, had been giving all the breaks to the gentiles. They had received their captaincies before the Jewish boys, and also had received the choice jobs in the battalion. At any rate, our company is now a quiet restful place instead of being a spot of continuous disharmony and discomfort.

While I was with the collecting company I was with one of the antisemitic group along with another who is an extremely heavy drinker but who has no antisemitic leanings. Chip you might know him. His name is Capt. John McAtee, and he occupied the same office with Murray Rich in Covington. Incidentally Murray is at Fort Hayes, Columbus, doing blood work of some sort. These two officers drink an average of a quart of liquor per day between them. It is remarkable to see them sip a mixture of ~~li~~whiskey and coco cola, or whiskey and water, all day long, just as we might sip a cup of hot coffee. Neither was too much affected by the whiskey, seeming able to do their duties and not showing any particular signs of drunkenness. Of course at night, when on a party, they really would put away a lot of whiskey in a short time (I saw three of them put away two quarts in 2 hours the last night I was at the collecting co.) and then they would show signs galore both in physical characteristics so typical, and also by falling asleep. It is a good thing that I don't drink, because if anyone had come in as an emergency they would have been totally incapable of taking care of him. At any rate because of the shake-up I was temporarily assigned to remain with the ~~clearing~~ collecting co. until we received a new shipment of docs, but at the last minute I was returned to the clearing co. in order to take over for one ~~man~~ of our docs who was acting as a medical umpire among the niggers and who had been taken sick. They sent another doc from our company over to the collecting co. in my place, where he still is. The funny part of it is that the umpire was well and ready to take over his job when I finally found him after driving over 100 miles in search of him. So I returned to the clearing co. The doc in the collecting co. in my place hated his period of one week with them, whereas I had liked it rather well. Now he is stuck in that job until relieved by the new docs we are expecting.

Well, that about does it for this time. I'll write more later if anything worth while happens.

Did you hear about the party that the Greek Gods had? They decide to invite one of the Norse gods, so they invited Thor. After a hilarious night, with ambrosia and nectar and everything else that gods might have, ~~NT~~Thor found himself in bed the following AM with a gorgeous nude creature ~~in bed~~ beside him. He thought it might be wise to impress her, so he said to her as she awoke, "I'm Thor". She looked at him and replied in an exasperated voice, "You're there!"

Love,
Walt.