

Mar. 29th

Hi Folks:

Yesterday was inspection day, as will be every Saturday from now on. We started Friday night with a "GI party."

Directly after show, we went to the barracks and started to scrub the floor with soap, bleach, brooms and mops. We washed all the windows, frames and all. Next came dusting everything, shining all three pairs of boots, arranging our footlockers in the prescribed manner, arranging our equipment and finally our clothes.

The footlocker was my biggest problem as I have too many personal items. In the lower front we can only have our underwear which must be rolled the Army way with no creases, ends or seams showing. On the top shelf we are allowed our socks (also rolled Army style), a Bible, field manual, comb, soap, toothbrush and toothpaste, razor and our shoe shining equipment. Everything else must be kept in the bottom back of the footlocker and put in such a way that it cannot be seen or it can be put in our duffle bags.

Our clothes are hung on a rack in back of the bed. All buttons must be buttoned, all fronts must face the same direction and all hangers must be the same way. The khaki sun tens are hung underneath the shirts and the other trousers are hung beneath the jackets. Our shoes and boots must be laced to the top and placed under the right side of the bed with the toes extending.

Our barracks did fairly well for the inspection although we were told that the boiler room and the latrine were not properly cleaned. I imagine the inspections will be more exacting when we get further along.

Yesterday afternoon we spent a little time on the drill field. I was scheduled to attend a class but plans must have been fouled up as no instructor met us at the assigned place. After waiting around for 45 minutes we went back to the barracks changed into fatigues and got in on the last 15 minutes of the drilling. The rest of the afternoon was spent fixing up the barracks to correct the complaints of the inspecting officers.

Last night I went shopping at different PXs to get an idea on what type of camera to buy. The PX for our Regiment does not have nearly the selection of the two others that I visited.

This morning we were awakened at 7:00 and before breakfast, had to go out and police the area. This was very disheartening as I planned on staying in bed until at least 7:30. When I get home I'm going to do two things, eat and sleep. I cannot see getting up every morning and running around a field while the sun is just starting to rise.

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At present I am on fire guard, a duty that entails watching the furnace and boiler fires (in my case, until midnight) to make sure they stay lit. It has the advantage of giving spare time to write, shine boots, read, etc., as there is not too much to do other than stay awake. However, it is costing me two and one half hours of sleep tonight. Also please excuse the black spots as it is just coal dust on my hands.

I'd like to introduce some of the fellows to you. There are a lot of names I cannot remember but I'll stick to my Platoon as I do not know many other fellows.

Bob Moore is the Platoon Sergeant, soon to become Asst. Field Sgt. as he has had past experience in the Navy and National Guard. He is from Columbus and is a terrific fellow. Bob has not let his authority go to his head which is an important thing among the other men.

Next in line is Cpl. Bob W? He is the Asst. Platoon Sgt. and probably will take the regular job when Moore moves up. At first I didn't care too much for Bob but I like him a lot more now that I have gotten to know him better. He is from Quincy and will



possibly be the source of my rides home.

Bill will probably take the job's place as Asst Platoon Sgt. At present he is my squad leader. Although I get along fine with Bill, most of the other fellows in the squad dislike him as he does not know how to use his granted power. In my opinion he would be a terrific fellow if he were just another man in the company.

My Asst. Squad leader is Wayne Shingledacker. He is a big, fat fellow from Iowa who is always ready to pitch in and give a hand when it is needed. Wayne is very popular with the rest of the squad, altho he is not tops mentally.

Possibly my greatest competition for the job of Asst. Squad Leader (if it opens up) is Charles Underwood. Although he is a negro, he is rather popular. He has had 2 years at Ohio State and has had some ROTC experience. Chuck is always arguing with the fellows on such topics as boxing, baseball, etc. He can argue for hours and will never admit defeat. He is also well liked. (Another Ohio boy, Cleveland.

John Scott is one of the assistant cooks which enables him to escape many details altho he must report to the Mess Hall every 4th day. He is not too popular in our Platoon altho he has made many friends in the other Platoons and also in the Camp as he sings at the Service Club. I could never get close to him as a friend as we are at different intellectual levels.

Another Cleveland boy, Jim Sainsbury, recently moved to this country from England. I have been going around with him altho he is only 18 1/2. He passed his Officers Candidate Test and was taking tests to get his high school diploma as one is necessary to get into OCS. If he passed the tests, he will get one. If he failed any of the tests, he could retake it later after he did a little reviewing. He enlisted as he as he wanted to get it over with and hopes to be able to go to College when he gets out. Jim is the fellow I thought about bringing to Cinny with me.

Walter Williams, a negro graduate from Withrow, sleeps above me. I do not have very much in common with him but we get along very well, always helping each other out.

Our first day of basic is about over, provided we have nothing scheduled for tonight. Per usual, we started out with our morning run. After xhew (I finally got enough as I was able to go back for seconds) we cleaned the barracks. This was rather difficult as someone stole one of our mops and brooms.

Our basic training started with an orientation speech by Major Genl. Porter (CO of Breckinridge). This talk was given in the theater about a block from our company area and, at least in my opinion, was mainly a lot of propaganda and bull. After our orientation, we were given a general lecture from our first Sgt. We then changed to our fatigues and started drilling. First of all, it was raining hard but that makes no difference to the Army. As it was, our Platoon was very sloppy while drilling and were really given hell. Actually we are not all together to begin as we have trouble hearing the commands due to the fact that we are the last platoon and thus furthest from the man giving the commands. At any rate, due to this sloppiness, we have a little party out on the drill field tonight.

After drilling, we went to a lecture and were shown how to pack our camp packs. We came back to the barracks and did it. I got a break as my equipment was used for the barrack's demonstration so I actually didn't do it completely, but I did learn the proper way.

I have just returned from the drill field. Not much else happened during the day other than our marching tonight. We did much better, perhaps because we were in small groups. That's all, now.