

April 26th, 1953.

Hi:

I'm going to try to discuss the past weeks events now, at least until I get tired of writing. When we left Sunday, we made pretty good time but ran into bad weather in Indiana. This slowed us up but not too much. I drove a good bit of the way back as Gus was tired. When we got back to Camp, I had quite a bit of work to do as I didn't do certain things before I left.

Monday was a rather easy day as most of our classes were indoors. We had two hours of First Aid, covering trench foot and snake bites. We also had another lecture in Military Justice covering Company Punishment and how we could refuse it if we wanted to risk a Court Martial. The last class of the morning was an hour of Physical Training. In the afternoon, we had a class in Individual Training which is preparing us for Bivouac. After two hours of lectures we went to the training area and went through the course which consisted of running to a certain point, hitting the ground, crawling as if we had some concealment (such as tall grass) until we came to a log. We crawled over the log and attempted to present the smallest possible target.

After we crossed the log, we took our next crawling position--the one used in open areas in which no part of our body leaves the ground. We continued in this position until we came to the barbed wire. Here, we turned over on our backs and crawled under. This completed the course. Altho it was only 50 yards long, it left all of us pretty tired.

Monday night I had another of my outstanding trainee classes. This class was being held on the other side of camp and we had to march about an hour until we found the building. After the class, we decided to take cabs back to our company.

Tuesday started with a class in Camouflage and Concealment. This was followed by another lecture in Individual Training. In the afternoon we had our first Bayonet class. I had no bayonet but practiced without one as we were just learning positions. I had been told that this class is worse than physical training and I believe it. To build us up, they had us holding our rifles above our heads, alternating arms, etc. The positions themselves are some of the most uncomfortable known and we have to hold them for a length of time. Every time we assume a new position we yell "Kill" (The spirit of the bayonet). Actually I hate this class and I never intend to use steel as long as I have one round of ammunition left in my weapon.

After this class we had a lecture in Chemical Warfare. Tuesday night I was scheduled for Charge of Quarters runner, which is an all night job (4:30 p.m. to 6:30 a.m.) As I was not feeling well, I was excused and went to bed, getting up only for ~~the~~ chow.

Wednesday morning I went to the Dispensary and discovered I had a temp of 100.6. They sent me back to the barracks after a shot and after receiving a bottle of cough medicine. I spent the entire day and night in bed getting up only to eat.

Thursday I reported back to duty and spent the entire day on the range. This was practice of firing from behind objects as there were tree stumps, faked rooftops, etc. at the different firing points. Thursday night our squad started to paint the upstairs.

Friday morning was spent on the range. This time we fired the Carbine rather than our M-1s. In the afternoon we had a class in chemical warfare which dealt with gas attacks. After that came another hour of bayonet training. Our final class of the afternoon was in Camouflage and Concealment.

Friday night we had a class in Individual Training in which they planned to show us how sounds and light can be easily observed at night and thus why we should be careful when near the enemy as it is easy to give away your position. I was selected as a demonstrator and got to ride to the training area. The rest of the men spent about 45 minutes marching there.

When I got to the area, I was told that there would be 3 stations, 200, 400, 600 yards from the troops. Another fellow and I were stationed at the 600 yard station. We were given a

a rifle, a walkie-talkie, blank cartridges, and a demonstration grenade. We had brought along a mess-kit, canteen, matches, and entrenching tool. When we were given the command, we were to make noise, strike matches, fire blanks or set off the grenade. At this time there was a steady downpour so we were all a little wet. To get to my position, I had to go across a field and manage to cross two ditches. These ditches were difficult as they were about ten feet deep, had sides sloping about 60 degrees, and had a three foot wide creek in the bottom. On top of this, we were loaded with equipment and had very little freedom of our hands. I didn't have too much trouble getting out to my point but returning, I slipped while trying to cross the second ditch and slid down the side right into the creek.

I couldn't try to break the fall as I had the radio in one hand and the rifle in the other. At any rate, I got to ride back so I jumped right into a hot shower. When the others returned we had our G.I. party.

Saturday morning I started off by going to the Supply Room for a different rifle, as the bayonet which had been issued to me Friday didn't fit my rifle as it had a worn bayonet stub. We marched out to the range again, this time for practice at firing at objects which appeared suddenly and quickly, dropped from sight. This is done by walking down a path flanked by bunkers, behind which were the targets.

I ~~spent~~ spent the afternoon cleaning my rifle and doing other jobs around the area. Last night I got up a Hearts game. Today I am barracks orderly which entails keeping the fires up and watching the barracks to keep anything from walking out in the hands of the wrong people. I've been pretty busy today as it got cold last night and we need the big fire going. I also managed to dye and polish a pair of boots and my low quarters. I still have one pair of boots to go.

All for now,

Alan.

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5/11/53 - sent snafu times instead of letters. To look up Peck.