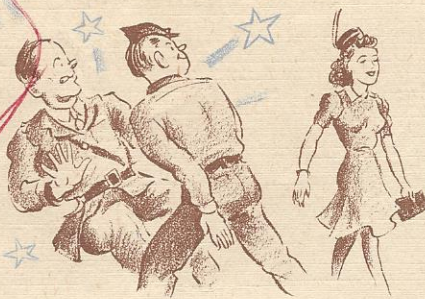


Page # 2 of 3
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THE OLD MAN SAID
AFTERWARD THAT IT WAS
LUCKY I DIDN'T BUMP INTO
SOME NEW SECOND LOOEY—

Wednesday - April 19, 1944

Dear Alice and Everyone,

Through some oversight of the War Dept., I have an hour which I can spend as I see fit, and I decided to write a letter while I still have the strength necessary to lift the pen. Today is the third day of actual training and believe you me, with sixteen and a half weeks to go, they are going to do a lot to make me a mere shadow of my former self.

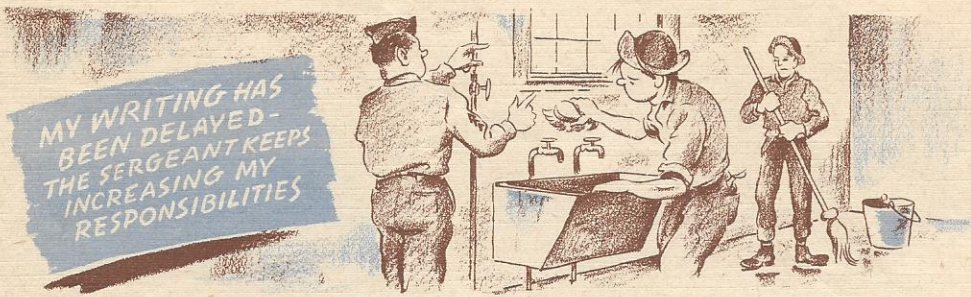
Our regular daily schedule consists of eight or nine one hour periods which usually start out with an hour of physical drill, the first five minutes of which we spend double-timing around a big field. At the end of the double-time running, comes 45 minutes of honest to God exercises, usually directed by a 2nd Lt. Nation, our platoon leader. This fifty minutes is followed by a 10 minute "break", during which we are free to smoke, catch our breath, etc. That is, provided the Lt.



4.-

an orientation talk. This particular talk was designed to familiarize a bunch of new recruits with what they were going into, when they left civilization. He read the articles of war which govern men in military service and explained functions of court martials, etc. Then he made a reference to what the chaplain had said, saying, "The Lord may have your soul, but the army has got your ass." And I'm here to tell you he knew whereof he spoke. And they say the only privilege a private has is "bitching" so that is what we all do. It doesn't do any good but sort of acts as a safety valve.

To get back to today's activities, the 8th period was devoted to military courtesy, more instructions on ^{who} how, when, and where to salute. This also included military courtesy which is covered by unwritten laws and varies from post to post in some details but is generally the same throughout the army. For instance if I want to see



5.-

our commanding officer, Capt. Coyle, I first have to contact our platoon sergeant, if he thinks the matter is of sufficient importance to bother the c.o. with, I get his permission to see the 1st. sgt () and if he can't take care of my troubles, he will give me permission to see the c.o. The ninth and last period was an interior guard and security. We were shown a "G.I." picture and lectured on censorship, and why it is necessary, and how seemingly unimportant small talks can result in serious complications and possible disaster. Censorship is only exercised on soldiers when they are overseas in certain areas. Whenever a soldier is overseas about the only thing he is permitted to write is that he is feeling well and eating good. Any reference to his outfit, how or when it moved where it is, number of troops, is strictly out; you can't even mention the weather.

That ~~to~~ concluded the days scheduled activities, however after chow we had

I'VE BEEN SPENDING
A LOT OF TIME WITH
THE CHINA-CLIPPER CREW

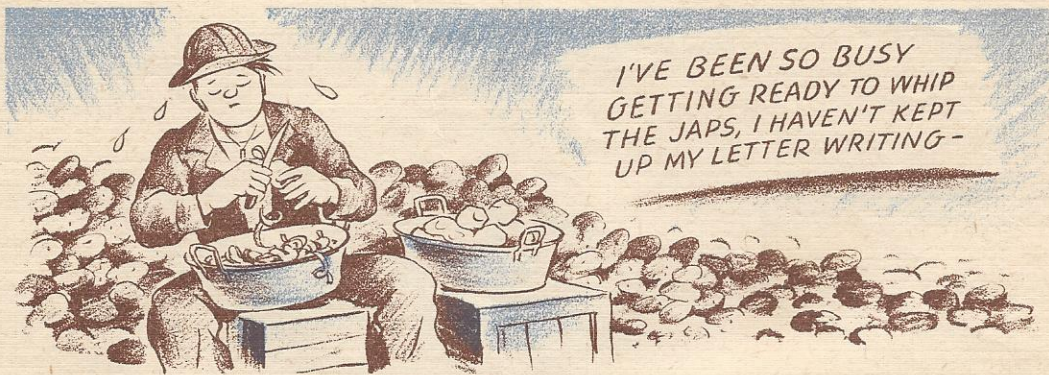


6.-

to line up at the supply room to have our rifles issued to us. I now have a brand new Garand rifle which the army calls an **M1**. and is that going to be a headache. It has to be cleaned several times daily, and clean means clean. Some guy in the 1st platoon had ^{this} rifle so dirty yesterday that you couldn't see through the barrel. He got seven days of detail work from 7:00 P.M. to 11:00 P.M. ^{including Sunday} doing all kinds of crappy work around the company area. All that is in addition to his regular training. I am going to keep my rifle clean. Tonight at 7:30 the 2nd platoon had to fall out for ~~their~~ rifle inspection, and it really quite a ~~to~~ ritual which I shall explain in detail another time, as the lights go out in about two minutes and I have to get my sleep.

Fifteen minutes later

The lights went out before I had a chance to finish this letter, so I have retired to the latrine where I am now writing from a seated position on a throne.



7.-

As long as I am here now I may as well write another page and explain how our training unit functions, in part anyway, so when I refer to a platoon, or a squad you will have an idea what I am speaking of. Our company has 6 commissioned officers, 34 cademen or noncommissioned officers, and some 200 privates or trainees like myself. Capt. Cagle is C.O. with a 1st Lt. Fowler as executive officer. The enlisted men are divided in four groups of approx. 50 men each, called platoons, under the direction of a 2nd Lt. Each platoon assembles in four ranks of 12 or 13 men each which are called squads. Each squad is under the direction of a corporal who is under a back sergeant (≡) who handles most of the detail work for the Lt. And in between the Sgt. & the Lt. is a Technical Sgt (≡) who goes around looking for troubles all the time and is usually quite successful in finding them. The balance of the cademen work in the orderly room, supply room and mess hall of which there is