

Dear Helen,

Well here it is p. a. l. You asked for it so I'll tell you all about it.

I came back from The West Texas oil fields the day after R day in mine ten forty. It had been pretty good the biggest part of the summer and I had worked in about three different bands but I got on a grand job in Odessa.

When I got home I just laid around and fattened up. Noticed that my draft number was coming up pretty fast, so I enlisted in the old Battery "A." It had been changed to Co. A 104 Infantry Battalion Anti-Tank.

This jumping the gun kept me out of the 200 Coast Artillery and off Bataan.

I started cooping with Sgt M. H. Belbe as mess sergeant, which didn't work too good. I stuck it out for 18 months, part of which time was devoted to showing S/lt Robert A. Marsh the ins and outs

of culinary arts in the army.

We entrained for Fort Sam Houston, January 16, 1941, at which post we were placed in the hands of some very competent non-coms from the second Division. These young men of the three and four hash mark variety, spent many many hours trying to teach us the intricacies of right and left face, about face, Bay the right and left flank, and to the rear, March.

After only a week of this nonsensical pattern (during which time I spent cleaning Cos machine from the 30 caliber rifles Model 1903) I was sent to the mess hall and

taught how to serve 700 men three meals a day by the simple process of putting everything in twenty gallon boilers and boiling it.

That is every thing but the eggs, which we only Boiled three times a week.

Along about this time I was promoted to Private first Class with third Class

of pulling a 24 hour shift starting at noon one day and ending at noon the other next day. It is Co B. first Battalion of the 9th Infantry Regiment. We stayed long enough to get our baggage inside the door. Back came the station wagon and we were loaded up and driven six blocks thru solid streets of mud to the Second Signal Co. where we were housed in a structure resembling a new dairy barn.

The place turned out to be quite nice thro, outside wading six inches of mud to reach the mess hall.

My first day on shift I was surprised to see holding the plate I had just shoveled three thumb nail sized chips that pass for meal outlets in the Army, nobody but Mantell Martin.

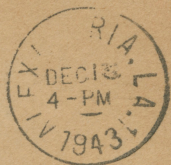
Sleepy and the better half wants to go to bed. More later
Fick

specialist pay. The Pfc. was still only worth 21 a month for four months. However the ~~spot~~ specialist pay was twenty dollars, so I didn't mind.

Well I must have been boiling the beef steak too tough because the C.O. (Capt. John Allen Phinizy) decided to send me to Babers and Cooks School.

We packed all our personal effects and were transported over to the Band C school headquarters. After fumbling around for a while in this building, someone finally felt sorry for us and asked us who we were. After a few more bewildering questions, we were carried bag and baggage over to a bannack that resembled the Waldorf-Astoria. This we were informed was our new home where we would eat and sleep and do our field work, which consisted

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