



CAMP CROFT
SOUTH CAROLINA

Sunday, March 21, '43

8:40 A. M.

Dear Mom,

It's Sunday morning and we just finished chow. Right now most of the fellows are waiting around to go to Mass at ^{Theatre} Chapel #3 at 9 o'clock. The rain is coming down in buckets; as a matter of fact, we have seen the sun only once since we arrived here 5 days ago on Wed. Half the barracks, yours truly included, is coughing its lungs out. It isn't the climate here that's caused it; it was sleeping in those damn cold tents at that damn Camp Upton. Most of us feel that if our coughs don't improve soon we'll go down to the dispensary and have them paint our throats and give us some pills to take. So that's that.

Tomorrow the first day of our 13 weeks training here begins. It's either going to make us or break us, and I don't intend having it break me.

You know, I'm rather surprised that my handwriting is as good as it is this morning. 'Cause

Last night we all had another shot for typhoid fever, and I could hardly sleep on my right side last night. It hurts like hell to raise the right arm above shoulder height; the fellows are walking around looking like lame ducks.

Two of the boys about 5 beds up from me are right now giving us a duet on the harmonica. They're playing "Back in the Saddle Again." Every so often, since they've been with us, they whip out their mouth organs and give with the music. Sounds good.

In the bunk right next to mine there's a nice, clean-cut Texan called Texas Mc Energy. Tex has made most of his money writing and singing hill-billy songs. He's recorded for Decca under the name of Red River Dave. Most of the fellows in this barracks are New York State men. But we have 2 or 3 Southern boys, and last night 8 good-looking New England boys came in. Some are from New Hampshire; others went to school at Connecticut State up at Storrs.

Yesterday we drew tent-halves, jacks, bayonets and packs from the Supply Office. We were supposed to get Garand Rifles, but only a few got them, since there weren't enough to go around. We'll get ours later. But we've already taken these rifles apart and put them together again. Before we're through, we're



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going to know the Garand like a book. And, along with knowing its working parts, and how to clean and fire the Garand, we're going to go through the same procedure with the Browning Automatic Rifle, the 30 cal. machine gun, the grenade gun, and ^{the} trench mortars. Firing all these weapons should prove interesting. Every day, all day long, except Sunday, you can hear rifle, machine gun and mortar fire in the background. And every day, too, we can see the more advanced students down here learning the ins and outs of bayonet practice. Gosh, but we're going to see a lot before we're through here.

Just before I wrote the first word at the top of this page, we were all called out for church services. The Catholic boys marched $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to ^{Mass} Church in Theatre #3. It was still raining cats & dogs. The service was very nice, as Mass always is. You can get an idea of what it was like by imagining Mass being said in a theatre slightly bigger than the Harbor. The only difference is that we have wooden benches for seats down here.

And the only off-color note was that a dog ran upon the stage just as the priest was preparing to give Communion. But fortunately one of the altar boys got him out of the theatre.

Mom, the enclosed pamphlet is the same thing I sent to Joe yesterday. Of course, I'm wearing the scapular that came with the enclosed pamphlet. And so Joe has both pamphlet and scapular too. But I thought it might set your mind at ease knowing that both of us is wearing one of these Carmelite scapulars. I got both the scapulars at Camp Upton. As far as I know, it is the aim of the Catholic chaplains to equip every Catholic Service man with one of these scapulars. At Upton I also got ~~an~~ a modern English version of the New Testament.

Well, mom, guess I've gotten to the end of my rope. So I'll close now, to write soon again. By the way, I have written to Aunty & Ma, Tommy & Kate, and Bert & Charlie so far. I still have to write to a few more, including ~~Mr.~~ Gladys & Bill, when I get a chance.

As a ^{chaplain} ~~platoon~~ said when we came in here, "No service man is training to die! They're all training to keep on living, and to return home after the war!"

And that is the God's honest truth.

P.S. Nothing to do Sundays but Love, as ever,
roll around the barracks. Not bad, eh?
Frank.

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