

Letter from Camp Custer, Michigan

The following are extracts from a letter to the editor from "Happy" Hagen and "Tud" Swingen, two local boys who left in the last draft:

How are you getting along? We are well and enjoy military life very much.

There are 10,000 "coons" in this camp, and believe us, there sure are some black ones in the bunch. We had watermelon for dinner but wish we could have been over to the negroes' camp to see them eat watermelon.

To tell you something about our drilling. We get up at 5:45, are supposed to dress in three minutes and be ready for reveille at 5:48. Reveille over at 6:00, then we clean our barracks and go in to breakfast or "chaw" as they call it here. Then we drill from 7:20 to 11:30. Dinner or "chaw" at 12:00. Then we drill from 1:00 p. m. until 4:00 or 4:30. Then we have supper, or "chaw" at 5:30. The last thing is Retreat which is Roll Call. Then we are supposed to go to bed at 9:00 because the lights are turned out. If we wish we can stay out until 11:00 p. m.

We have not had a chance to get out because we have been quarantined for two weeks, and that time will be up next Saturday.

The first four days consisted in taking examinations and taking a shot in the arm and also being vaccinated. On the way to be vaccinated we passed a bunch of "coons" and they said, "Wait till you get dat shot, -boys."

They figure on lynching a couple of "coons" next week for doing the same thing that those three did at Camp Dodge. The captain said we would be permitted to see the lynching.

Some of the boys don't seem to be able to stand at attention, which is to hold your body erect and not move a muscle. Night before last seven of our company fell down and did not come to for quite a while. Last night one in our company fell and seven in the next company to ours. One of the boys in the other company broke two or three teeth when he fell.

We were out to a Y. M. C. A. meeting this morning and heard some good singing and preaching. They told us if we were not good singers we would not be good fighters. When we got back to camp Swingen sang to the boys and they wanted him to sing more, but he told them he had mud in his throat and could not sing any more.

We must close for this time with the best regards to the boys up there.

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