

THE EDITOR'S COMMENT

Bill Rogers, below, the Citizen's editor and publisher, has recently been assigned to a tank destroyer battalion in training at Camp Hood, Texas. From now on, he will continue this column.

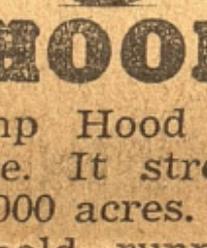


—Picture Courtesy of Ft. Worth Star-Telegram.

Introduction To A Line Outfit

TODAY, FRIDAY, September 18, they are going to dedicate the largest tank destroyer camp in the United States if

CAMP



HOOD

not in the world. It is Camp Hood, Texas, about a hundred and fifty miles south of Fort Worth. This Camp Hood is a tremendous place. It stretches over some 100,000 acres. It is large enough to hold running fights with tanks that will stretch out and last over thirty-five miles. When complete the camp will house over 80,000 men.

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I CAME TO Camp Hood right out of the Field Artillery Officers' School at Camp Roberts, California. About 6 o'clock one evening I presented myself, all neatly polished and brushed as the school had told me to do, at the Camp Hood headquarters which, except for the fact that it was in a three-quarters finished gymnasium, looked almost the same as any other camp headquarters.

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WHEN AFTER showing my orders I asked the adjutant to take me to my battalion, I got a fishy stare, and instead he walked me over to a large map hanging on an unfinished wall. "Here," he said, pointing to one corner of the map, "is where we are. And there," pointing to the opposite corner way up near the roof, "is the area of your battalion. This is Camp Hood, all right. But you have about 45 more miles to go."

Then he turned to me and said, "You can read a map, of course, lieutenant." I nodded. "Well, just study it a moment and then you can direct the taxi driver." And with that he left me alone.

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TRYING TO remember whether red meant that the road was paved or impassable (I knew it meant one or the other) and trying to remember whether this symbol meant a church or a bridge I studied the map with more intensity than I ever did in any of the courses at Roberts. Here for the first time I was putting into practice things I was supposed to have learned in theory.

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FORTUNATELY THE taxi driver was a native of the place and so, though I flatter myself that we should have found the place anyway, I just relaxed and let him do the directing. En route to the battalion the taxi driver just casually mentioned the fact that Camp Hood was in a dry county. In this county not even wines or beer could be sold. Then he went on to say what a wonderful thing the coming of prohibition had meant to the district and what a wonderful thing it would be for the soldiers who were coming to Camp Hood to have the temptation of beer taken away from them. He was, and is, the only prohibitionist taxi

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driver I have ever met.

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WHEN WE ARRIVED at the battalion area, the night was black as coal. We crawled in and out among the dark silhouette of tents, trucks and trees, and finally pulled up before a lighted tent that was the orderly room. Here I awaited the arrival of the officer of the day who eventually appeared driving a jeep with black-out lights on.

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THE OFFICER OF the day took me over to a vacant tent, showed me my bed, said the latrine was in the last tent over behind a clump of trees, that reveille would be at 5:45, that the uniform would be coveralls (of which I had brought none, although I did have a full dress outfit), that it was a good idea to shake out my shoes in the morning as some of the men had found black widow spiders in them. Then, flicking off his flashlight he hopped into his jeep and drove off, leaving me in the darkness with my carefully polished brass, my laboriously shined shoes.

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THIS WAS MY introduction to Camp Hood and the Tank Destroyers—my introduction to a line, as against a training, battalion. Here at Hood we don't use maps of the area around Gettysburg, but maps of the area around Hood. Here I drove my first jeep, rode my first motorcycle and shot my first tommy gun from the hip. Here we don't memorize the nomenclature of guns. We fire them.—B. R.

Pic Publishes Rogers Photos

A newsy and pictorially interesting discussion of the Will Rogers, Jr., for Congress campaign appears in the September 29 issue of "Pic," national pictorial magazine, now available on newsstands.

Pictures made during the campaign as well as photos of the Will Rogers family during Will Jr.'s youth are interspersed with remarks about the campaign.