

On the range) Dear - Flash! Puppy does drag! 5/22/43

Yep, its the truth. I did so well most of the boys dont believe it was legitimate, if I Fort Ontario, New York can keep up at the present clip, I'll be wearing a not a marksmen medal, but a sharpshooter's! I wont be able to keep it up for several reasons. But I hope I'll make marksmen. I do so that will give me w a good drag; all the men in his family will have qualified at least as marksmen. I have finished for the day - I was finished 3 hrs ago - but I cannot go back. That means, as I told you, I wont be able to write except out here & I wont be able to return the main until I am off the range... I am sorry, maybe you could get Mrs. H. to accept my radio until I can get this back... Now for what happened today (first let me tell you I'm flat on my belly on my rain coat, which is spread on the ground. My "desk" is a hunk of wood about 6x11 at a small flat table... I got up this a.m. at 3:30. We left about 5:25. I came out on the truck because my knee was still hurting. As the day went on it got a bit better, now it is not bad. We had had a hard rain storm yesterday. It rained all night. When we got here the ground was & is like a Utahian Spring. I'm catted with ed firing. (I was first) it started getting better, now the ground is drying out & I'm wearing my sunglasses. Well, to get to the firing. Let me explain the scoring. A bulls eye is 105, & there are 4 of 'em around it. To qualify you need 105, half on this target. My first shot was a 105! The scores were 105, 7 bulls & a score of 107. We had another province round, on which I did 104. This was excellent shooting. But I was getting no benefit of the rounds. Then came the "round firing" - I shot kneeling, sitting & standing - slow fire. I began with 22 points on my first 5! But I tired fast. The positions are painful for my back & knees. I hit on the rapid fire they record us with local practice. At the moment my knee isn't bothering me, my back is resting, but my sinuses are clapping up here. So, despite everything, I'm once again proud of having done well. I spoke to the pit men, who call the boys, & the scorer who records them, & all tell me they gave me only what I earned. Now I need but 53 on the 20 rapid-fire shots to "qualify". Well, they is your day, too. I hope you can not report that you are mending. This will be good news. And it will be in plus things for me too. But don't let it worry you if you have to report failure. It will be in happy, but it wont be too much to take. Everything good later. I'm not applying for OCS here & before I do at the next place I'm going to try to get a furlough at the right time. Then, if we had fail this time, we will, if I get a furlough, have another crack at it before I apply. If I am accepted (which should take more than a month, I might be able to get a short furlough. They are some times given before OCS. Above, in telling you a little about the firing I forgot to tell you the Bullseye is but 10" wide,

While it is 600 ft. from the rifle, I can barely see it. The sight for a clean miss, meaning the bullet did not hit the target at all, is called "lagged" or "overshot". It is a red flag and is across the front of the target. We are over the hole, the slope of which is only about 20 ft. from the targets. The men operating the targets are in pits about 10 ft deep, so they are safe.

In all, I fired 10 shots today. I have 50 more to go. 70 is quite a bit for one time, but I have suffered no ill effects. Two of the men, however, refused to shoot the rifles. One was a corporal who, apparently, attained that rating with out hitting over fire a rifle. He is the one whose "marching exploits" I have recounted from time to time.

And now, at 2 p.m. I'm taking a "breath". And I have visited the latrine, about a 1/4 of a mile away. It is a super-8 (Kaiser) open, clean & with lids. And it starts, & I almost had to have help getting up.

By way of this party, I'm getting rough. The boys are wrestling, shooting crop, & the singing is too awkward but of a possible 100, men who never fired a rifle before are getting phenomenal almost perfect scores. One man was heard with 10 bullets, & from 10 men in 20 shots - 76 out of 100. That's too bad. They should help the boys a little, but not that much.

Last night I wrote you from the service club. I was in a hurry because I was uncomfortable & wanted to sleep. I did - at the movie, where I saw & enjoyed "My Sister Helen." Does "Man" still have his copy of Jake Whatchinname, he new one? Did I like to read that soon. Also, what have I besides the Studtor? I want to ~~read~~ read that as soon as I get to the next place, but it is, I think, a bit bulky for here. But if I have nothing else on hand I'll want that soon. I'm about 20% through today. I like it. I'll bring it along tomorrow if the weather is okay. I could have finished it today.

I feel very lucky today. I'm almost tempted to get into the crop game. I think I could clear it. But I'm not. I'm into my last 25, & I'll cash a check before I leave here. I have a letter back at the Fort - I presume from you. The boys don't bring it out but they told me I had one. And here I'll take another "check". ... I yielded to temptation long enough to win a half dollar in the crop game & then lose it + 75¢ of my own. If it weren't for the really big market on firing rifles + for the cold I could take a nap + perhaps sleep off this side us headaches. Some of the boys are wearing winter underwear, a dress shirt, a foreign shirt + their field jackets. I'm cool with all this unless the dress shirt. Damned cold for May or - for any place in the U.S. ... someone is offering candy, I'm hungry so I'm off again. I missed the candy, so I decided I would get into the crop game for another 50¢ - the amount of change I have with me, but on other days (if the game ended fast, I should take the spare any possible winning, on your (insurance taken?) will, dear. I think I'll try to take a nap. Love Fred