

Addendum: Clarence Williams

N.Y. State Guard April 1943 - March 1944

I joined the State Guard in April 1943, 6th regiment D company. Officers: Capt. J. LeRoy Connick, 1Lt. Fritz Updike, 2nd Lt's Lawrence Cook and E. Arnold Evans. Senior enlisted was M/Sgt. Earl Drummond. Coach Charles Edkins a corporal.

The guard experience was, in effect, basic training for future military service. We learned military courtesy, discipline, manual of arms, close order marching and chain of command. We were issued the 03 model Springfield rifle and trained in the use of the Thompson "Tommy" gun and the Reising sub-machine gun. We had to master "field stripping" the rifle and both sub-machine guns. Eventually we could "strip" all three while blindfolded. The worst was the Reising as it had a high tension spring that often got loose and would fly out about 20-30 ft.

In 1943 Our Company spent two weeks field training at Camp Smith, Peekskill, N.Y. We had training on the small arms range, mock drills on containing crowds and riots, building security and field maneuvers. We all stood perimeter watch duty for the camp. We were not allowed ammunition for this duty. While on my watch I heard a lot of rustling in the ravine below. As required I called as loud as I could for the corporal of the guard. He got me quieted down and then called out for all to hear that whoever was down in the ravine to come up quietly. They did and were led away to

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the guardpost. In a while the corporal came back to me and told me the men were returning from the town bars after sneaking out. I was told that if anymore come in I was to keep them quiet and see that they got headed to their tents. He didn't want to hear any more from me. Only two more came up and I did what I was told. No one was turned in and we were just one happy family and just one initially scared watch soldier.

This "Guard" experience served me well in navy "boot" camp at Sampson. I was made ^{platoon} leader and was responsible for the men's performance of their marching to classes, meals, calisthenics and cleaning functions at the barracks, such as toilets, windows, and living area. Consequently I was never assigned any "K P" (kitchen police) duties such as serving meals, washing pots and pans or any other cleaning duties. I was in charge, at times, over the performance of the men.

On the first day at Sampson we were issued our clothing. This was the first time in my life, I had shoes that really fit me. The shoe was made by Florsheim and was size 9 EEEEE. We were also issued a utility (work) shoe, I came just above the ankle and not a smooth finish. We called them boardwalkers. These shoes caused raw sores on my ankles and instep. The doctors gave me a paper that ordered me to wear white socks (issue was black) and low shoes.

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Thereafter I guess I was the only man sailor that wore white socks. (even today). While in boot camp I had to wear puttees in order to hide the white socks so I was always carrying the guidon banner on the color guard.