



NEWS FROM FT. JACKSON

By Bobby Sloan.

On maneuver in Tennessee—Due to go down as immortal after the maneuver is over, is the group of yodellers from Company H, known as Capt. Plott's. They have been very generous with their voices and have made many long hours seem shorter. The three who have become the best known are Lewis (Texas Ruby) Mathis, C. O. (Columbus) James, and Elmer (Pneumonia) Simpson. The first two these are, as you all know, Haywood boys—mountain yodellers if they are the real thing should after all come from the mountains! Keep up the good work, boys.

Last Saturday morning when we were bivouaced beside the Second Battalion (Company H was across the field from me) I chanced into conversation with Sergeant Ed Hill. When I asked him if he had anything which might be of interest to you folks, he pointed out something which I followed up and found to be unique. During the entire maneuver period, there has not been a single soldier in Company H to fall by the way-side, although some of the marches through rain and mud have been as long as twenty-five miles. This speaks for itself. This is the only company to my knowledge which can point to such a record. It needs no elaboration to point to the credit it reflects on the training which this company has received, because it shows not only a good physical condition to start with, but a hardened type of men who (although they may complain and "grouse" about food, and everything else in the company) are deriving considerable benefit from the "stretch" in the army.

I won't mention any names but here is something which I thought humorous. It is told of a certain Sergeant in H Company that he ordered a barrage laid with a 50 calibre machine gun—a gun, for your information, gentle reader, which should be fired in short bursts or it becomes overheated. This may not be humorous to you, but

tacked. It must be remembered by you folks at home that while this is "play" war, that often we get worked up to a degree where if umpires don't come in and stop it and remind the soldiers that it is all in fun, soldiers from the opposing armies will clash with rocks and fists. Thus it was that when the hill was attacked by the enemy that Company H stood its ground and refused to retreat. Even after the order was given for a withdrawal, the men enthralled by the spirit of the morning, stayed at their posts until the last. In fact, when the "smoke of the battle" cleared away, three-fourths of the company were either casualties or prisoners. That, folks, is the spirit which has given the 30th Division in the past her brilliant military reputation.

A humorist in Company H has coined a bon mot expression which I think deserves a great deal of repetition. You know the mechanized division which came from Fort Benning (Tanks, Heavy and Light, Mechanized throughout, Aromored cars, et., with a special mechanized corps of engineers) have a reputation and a nickname "Hell on Wheels." This soldier said the 30th Division should be called, "Hell on Feet!"

The stop-gap has been opened at last and for the final phase of the Tennessee maneuver, which we are now in the midst of everything has been thrown into play. Tanks are now an old story with us, and all the remaining ammunition has been issued so that in this last week we are to have plenty of fireworks. A battalion of parachute troops arrived over the last week-end—the last troops, incidentally, to be brought to the field. These of course add as much excitement to the maneuver as did the

arrival of the tanks last week. There is so much to write about and so little space to put it in. As far as news is concerned, it is just like arriving at a fertile valley after a long journey over desert wastes. Every minute of every day is filled with something new—some new development, an incident of interest, and all the things which go to inject color into what has been generally a drab period this last three weeks. When I write of interesting happenings, remember generally these took place in about an hour of the week. I don't mention the other hours when you sit in a lethargy wondering what is happening and what you are going to do next. The private in the front lines knows very little of the general picture of the fighting front as a whole it will be remembered, for even the officers of a company know very little of the general situation and many times not very much about even the situation of the battalion. (Of course, Captain Plott with his association with battalion headquarters is an exception to this rule, and the officers of Company H are probably better informed of the local situation and even the general situation than are most company officers). But it should be further remembered that maneuvers of this type are for the training of officers of field grade and better. Besides the element of hardening the individuals, there is very little training for companies which hasn't been gleaned from maneuvers back at Jackson. The individual soldier and company is not as important on a maneuver of this size as is the training battalion, regimental, brigade and other commanding officers on up the scale. Why do they bring troops this far and go to so much trouble? I didn't mean to minimize the training the individual soldier or company or the

physical hardening and toughening such a maneuver brings with it, but it is in shutting back and forth these large bodies of men and fighting equipment that the officers get their training, without whose direction the best individually trained soldiers would be of little use in combat, for it is the supervision by higher authority, and the right and correct meeting of situations in combat which wins battles, and wars.

Maneuvers of this type are beyond the comprehension of the average layman back home. Soldiers come home and talk about marches, fatigue details, food (good or bad), early rising, firing, etc., but there is no way of fully telling anyone about the army and army life. There is contentment here, greater than you can experience outside, because here values are different than elsewhere, and there is discontent, unimaginable discontent, which comes over you like a wave and last perhaps a few hours, perhaps a few days. What I am trying to say is that there is nothing little about the army. Happy or unhappy, you experience your feelings in a large way. You have more friends and they are closer friends; supreme happiness (because it takes so little in the army to change despair into hope, dejection into exultation) comes over little things: A cool drink after being without water for a few hours, sunshine after a night march through heavy rain, etc. Do you see what I am trying to explain? It is something which no one can tell you about, and if you ask a soldier about it it will be the one thing he is most reticent

about. But it is the reason soldier re-enlists after the expiration of his "stretch," after three years about what a soldier was to get into the army about how quickly he was to get out when he finishes his enlistment. Then when he lists (as a surprising number the "grouses" are and will then he begins another period "grousing" all over again!

Federation Picnic Set For August 9th
The Haywood County Federation picnic will be held Saturday, August 9th, at the high school on Jonathan's according to an announcement by James G. K. McClure, president of the Federation.

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