

**ARMY LIFE DURING W.W. II  
BY DWIGHT RINGLAND**

I WAS BORN A LEO, IN RIVERSIDE, CAL. AUG. 6, 1922--- THAT WAS A HELLUVA GOOD YEAR AND I'VE BEEN ROARING EVER SINCE. I GRADUATED FROM RIVERSIDE POLY HIGH---NO CUM LOUDLY---IN 1940 AND WITH A MODEST SCHOLARSHIP ATTENDED INDIANA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY IN INDIANAPOLIS. I MAJORED IN CAMPUSTRY AND FUN. IN MY SOPHOMORE YEAR CLARA CAME INTO MY LIFE-WHAT ELSE CAN I SAY? SHE HASN'T LEFT ME YET. COLLEGE RESERVE PROGRAMS SPRANG UP SO I TOOK A LOOK AT THE MARINE RESERVE. IT DIDN'T TAKE ME LONG TO REALIZE THAT SOMEONE COULD GET HURT DOING THAT KIND OF STUFF SO I STUMBLED INTO THE ARMY RESERVE. YOU SAY "WHAT THE HELL HAS THAT GOT TO DO WITH SHEMYA?"---NUTHIN!

CLARA AND I WERE MARRIED APRIL 3.1943 AND I REPORTED APRIL 7, AT FORT HARRISON. INDIANA, RATHER TIRED BUT STILL FULL OF PATRIOTIC DUTY. ---MY FIRST DETAIL WAS, OF COURSE, K.P. AND THE SECOND WAS WALKING GUARD DUTY AROUND A V. D. WARD AT THE HOSPITAL TO KEEP THOSE BIRDS FROM GETTING OUT. AT FORT LEONARD WOOD, MO. I WAS CALLED IN BY CAPT. LONG AND OFFERED OUTBOARD MOTOR SCHOOL OR PHOTOTOPOGRAPHY SCHOOL. PEOPLE WERE GETTING HURT IN THE RIVER CROSSINGS IN EUROPE AND THOSE BULLET HOLES NEVER LOOKED GOOD ON ME SO I CHOSE THE LATTER.

---THE AXIS HEARD ABOUT THIS AND KEPT ON FIGHTING. BUT YOU SAY "WHAT THE HELL DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH SHEMYA?"--NUTHIN.

CLARA CAME TO BELVOIR AND RENTED A MOTEL ROOM JUST OUTSIDE OF THE CAMP GATE. I DON'T THINK SHE EVER DID FIGURE OUT WHY THE ROOMS RENTED FOR TWO HOURS AT A TIME, COMPLETE WITH ROACHES AND NO QUESTIONS ASKED. FINALLY OFF TO THE WARS---I HAD A PLEASANT DELAY EN ROUTE IN RIVERSIDE THEN ON TO CAMP BEAL CAL. ---BY RAIL TO PRINCE RUPERT CANADA---ACROSS THE GULF OF ALASKA BY SHIP. THERE WERE NO ROADS FROM WHITTIER TO PORTAGE SO WE WENT THROUGH THE TUNNELS BY TRAIN AND THEN BY TRUCK TO ANCHORAGE AND FORT RICHARDSON. I WAS A CASUAL FOR AWHILE. --WHEN THE JAPANESE WERE MOVING UP THE CHAIN THE ARMY HAD AIRLIFTED BIG BAGS OF COKE TO FORT RICHARDSON AND SCATTERED THEM OVER THE CANTONMENT AREAS. IT FELL MY LOT TO GO OUT AND FIND THEM BAGS AND HAUL WHAT WAS LEFT OF THEM TO ONE COMMON COAL PILE. WE WEREN'T TOO TIDY WHEN WE CAME IN AT NIGHT AND THE LATRINE ORDERLIES REFERRED TO US AS "COKESACKERS" OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT. THEN CAME THE BIG DAY-- A NEW JOB, I BECAME COMPANY TRUCK DRIVER HAULING GARBAGE AND MAIL. THE STORY HAS IT THAT THE

GOOD SOLDIERS STAY AT ANCHORAGE AND THE REST WERE SENT DOWN THE CHAIN ACCORDING TO ABILITY. MAN! THEY SENT ME CLEAR TO THE END. ---THE JAPS HEARD ABOUT THIS AND KEPT ON FIGHTING. NOW THE PLOT DEEPENS. BUT YOU SAY "WHAT THE HELL HAS THIS TO DO WITH SHEMYA"? MMM. . . . . NOT MUCH.

I WAS ASSIGNED TO THE DETACHMENT ENGINEERS DOING ALL MANNER OF CIVIL ENGINEERING TASKS. ---SOUNDS SOPHISTICATED. RIGHT?... WRONG--MOPPED TAR ON HANGAR ROOFS SPREAD SAND ON FROZEN TAXI WAYS. ONWARD AND UPWARD... I THEN MOVED IN TO THE CARPENTER SHOP, BUILDING DUCK BOARDS. ON SHEMYA YOU EITHER WALKED ON DUCK BOARDS OR YOU FELL IN TO THE DITCH AND I WASN'T VERY TALL.

I THINK MY MOST NOVEL EXPERIENCE WAS WALLOWING IN GASOLINE AT MIDNIGHT TRYING TO FIND A LEAK IN THE TANK FARM. EVENTUALLY A YOUNG MAINTENANCE OFFICER SHOWED UP WITH A COMMAND THAT WE GET THAT PIPE WELDED SHUT A. S. A. P. ---WELL I NEVER HEARD A NON-COM CHEW OUT AN OFFICER WITH SUCH LANGUAGE.

ANOTHER UNUSUAL PROJECT WAS TO DESTROY OLD EXCESS DYNAMITE THAT HAD BECOME UNSTABLE. M A N Y THEORIES PROPOUNDED--THE SOLUTION WAS TO GET T H E MARINES TO BURN THE STUFF, BELIEVE ME, I STAYED AWAY WHILE THIS WAS GOING ON. ABOUT THAT TIME A FIGHTER PILOT BAILED OUT OVERHEAD, PULLED THE RIP CORD AND NOTHING--NO RESPONSE--SUDDENLY PASSED A \_ MARINE GOING UP---"KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT PACKING A CHUTE?"--- "NO-YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT BURNIN' DYNAMITE?"

YOU MAY RECALL THAT OCCASIONALLY WE WOULD GET A WORN OUT U. S. O. SHOW COMPLETE WITH SOILED TASSELS, TAP SHOES AND CELLULITE. FOR A CLIMATIC FINISH ONE OLD HOOFER RAN ACROSS THE STAGE IN A BURST OF ENERGY AND LANDED IN A DRAMATIC SPLIT----THERE WAS A SCREAM AND A VOICE RANG OUT FROM THE REAR-- "DON'T BREAK IT LADY IT ' S THE ONLY ONE ON THE ISLAND. " I'VE BEEN ASKED "HOW DID YOU ENDURE THAT SORT OF EXISTENCE?" I USUALLY SAY LIFE IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT. I WAS FORTUNATE TO LIVE WITH A GOOD GROUP OF GUYS. I TRIED TO GET A SECTION 8 BUT TO NO AVAIL. I STARTED TO BUILD A BOBSLED LONG ENOUGH FOR SIX MEN. REMEMBER HOW FLAT THE ISLAND WAS? AFTER MANY LONG HOURS IN THE CARPENTER SHOP THE THING WAS COMPLETED WITH STEEL RUNNERS. THE DOCTORS WERE WATCHING ME PRETTY CLOSE, WELL I GOT A WEAPONS CARRIER AND 50 FEET OF ROPE. WE REALLY RAISED HELL AT NIGHT ON THOSE FROZEN ROADS.

**(ED> NOTE: THIS IS THE FUNNIEST STORY OF ALL THE REPLIES I RECEIVED. IT IS A WELL-WRITTEN HUMOROUS STORY OF ARMY LIFE IN W. W. II. PLEASE FORGIVE THE EDITING DWIGHT, I T WAS NECESSARY TO FIT THE SPACE AVAILABLE.)**

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