As You Were

Where fond military memories fall in.

In No Hurry to Get "Home"

FOLLOWING 8 weeks of construction-surveyor training, in Murnau, Germany, my Army buddy Mike Stone and I made our way back to our unit, the 543rd Engineering Company, in Chinon, France. The school in Murnau was fairly demanding, but the living conditions and the food more than made up for it.

By contrast, in Chinon, we were housed in tar-paper shacks with no running water, no electricity (we had generators) and no indoor toilet facilities. Heat came from coal-burning, potbellied stoves. The food was terrible, even by Army standards.

—Marvin Smyth, Dearborn, Michigan

Is That the Aged Variety?

WHEN THE USS General William S. Black docked in Marseille, France, on December 8, 1944, its passenger list consisted of the 242nd Infantry Regiment of the 42nd Infantry Division (the Rainbow Division)—which meant I was on board.

Shortly after we had sailed from New York, I came below decks to find the platoon gathered around Lt. Cornelius J. Sullivan, our platoon leader. "Sully" was slicing what appeared to be a block of light-colored cheese and handing pieces to the guys.

When we had boarded the ship, we had been given mail that had been accumulating for us, and I assumed Sully had received a package from home and was sharing his cheese with us. Being a chowhound, I made sure that I got a piece of that cheese.

As soon as Sully handed me a slice, I took a huge bite–and immediately gagged! He was distributing "salt water" soap to be used for

washing up on board, as no freshwater was used for that purpose —only seawater.

It took quite a while for the laughter to die down.

—Arnie Crouch, Dayton, Ohio

Thanksgiving Finger Food

IN 1943, while serving at Camp Elliott, in San Diego, California, we heard that everyone in the Marine Corps, all over the world, would be enjoying a hot Thanksgiving meal with all of the trimmings.

And it was no scuttlebutt. When Thanksgiving arrived, there was nothing missing from the menu. Every morsel was delicious, and we could even have seconds.

However, one thing had been overlooked. There was not enough clean silverware to go around, so you got either a fork, a knife or a spoon to eat everything from soup to ice cream. I happened to get a knife. I managed pretty well with the soup and managed everything else with the help of my fingers.

The green peas were quite a challenge, as was the ice cream for dessert, but it was a Thanksgiving dinner never to be forgotten.

—Murray Bromberg, San Diego, California