

Augusta Military Academy

Oral History

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I had started a long letter telling you all the things that I remembered about AMA but the following succinctly expresses my feelings--

I begged my Mother in the summer of 1944 to send me to a military school. She picked AMA because **Joe Goldfard** went there and he and I were friends even though he was three years older than me.

I loved AMA from the moment we drove up the road. For the four years that I went there I could not wait until September to start school with my friends. I abhorred May because I knew that it would be a long summer before I came back to the school that I loved.

o.k.--I'll tell you some of the things that I can remember from my rat year--

First night a bunch of upper classmen came around to haze us. I can only remember one name- Rockwell-he came into the room after I had my pants removed, made to sit on the metal desk and had my finger ready to be stuck into the light socket. Rockwell told the others to stop it.

I became the dyke of one of the cadet Lts. - in case you forgot that meant making his bed, cleaning his room, picking up his laundry, etc. There were three other upper classmen in the room so there were a total of 4 dykes.

One was my cadet captain - last name of Stanley, forget his first name but not Paul who was also a captain. This guy always slept late until last call and then would go out to formation with his overcoat on and pants legs sewed to the bottom of his coat so in actuality all he had on under the overcoat was his underwear.

After a few weeks (around November of '44) we had eclairs for dessert - I can't remember the head cook's name but he was extremely overweight. One of the cooks saw some green stuff in the eclair's filling - the head man told him to "mix it up", which he did. Whoever ate the eclairs , and some upper classmen got two from us rats, got ptomaine poisoning. The next morning , for breakfast , we were served SOS - my captain Stanley (D Co.) threw the dish of SOS against the wall.

Another incident that I remember was right after that - prior to Thanksgiving vacation. It was breakfast call - we were at formation - I made some smart-ass remark to Jim Ragsdale, who was in front

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of me - he turned around and hit me - then they called "FALL IN " I passed out - Jim thought he had killed me. My LT (Bales) and a second year cadet named Geist carried me to the infirmary - I had mumps. Bales and Geist got it from me , I guess , and I was released so I could celebrate Thanksgiving- Geist's mumps fell - both of them missed Thanksgiving. You can imagine my life for a while after that.

This takes us to Christmas 1944. Nothing that I can remember until September 1945. I remember more incidents from my rat year-something that I think all went through--Rifle Inspections--I never had a clean rifle! I used a new shaving brush for the dust - I had a special toothbrush to clean parts of my rifle - I used shoe polish on the stock - it shined like glass! In my mind it was perfect. In the mind of the upper classmen it was either dusty, oily, or filthy.

Whenever the PMS&T (I think that is correct for the army people assigned to the ROTC) inspected MY RIFLE they found nothing wrong with it.

We were issued a rifle within a few days of entering AMA. It was a 1903 Springfield. After a few months we were told to report to the armory with our weapons. I heard they were going to issue us new ones. I got a new Enfield all wrapped up like a present - I thought that was nice of them to wrap it so it wouldn't get dirty - SURPRISE! - It was all greasy - cosmoline - it took me all night to get it clean.

On one of the punishment tours for having a dirty rifle - I missed going into town on Monday - I had to go to the farm where I picked apples, pitched hay and cleaned the barn for 11 hours. I thought about the slaves before the War Between the States.

A week later, Col. Robinson called me into his office and gave me an envelope for pay when I worked the farm. It was \$1.10 -- that was ten cents an hour.

Other punishment tours were marching miles and miles and miles while the Cadet LT rode a horse. We double timed. At times I thought I would die. I wish I could do it today - golf doesn't do it.

I remember the Winchester apple festival. That was a march! I don't remember anything after the parade - I think we were allowed to stay in town for a while. what I do remember is the corps went to the parade with the exception of First Captain Weed in my first year. He went on a hot date the opposite way. He was busted to a first-classman like me. He had to square his corners, meals, etc.

You can view the 1948 RECALL Online here:

<https://galleries.amaalumni.org/Recalls/Recall-1948/>