

War Era Story Project 2012

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Age: 90

This Is My World War II Story

When they lowered the draft to 18, I was in the first wave to be drafted. I received 13 weeks of infantry training that made me into a 170-pound infantry man. With less than three months in the army, I was loaded on a ship and sent to the South Pacific, where I was sent to the 32nd Infantry Division.

Soon I made my first landing on Good Enough Island. I spent three months there in two hospitals with a disease called scrub typhus, and followed that up with Yellow jaundice. Many soldiers died from the disease. It was the monsoon season, and one day the water cane thru the hospital up to the top of the legs on my bed. It was a sad Christmas. A soldier in the hospital with me ended it all by hanging. The next Christmas found me sleeping underground on Leyte Island due to artillery shells landing all around. The next year, I made a landing near Manila where I was when the war ended.

Another ship brought me home where I was discharged at age 22 weighting only 135 pounds. Since I never received any furlough during my time in the army, they had to pay me for my furlough lost. My time in the war cost me three years of the prime time of my life. All I got from the war was a drawer full of medals, including the bronze star and the history story of the 32nd Infantry Division. After the war I was asked to join the American Legion, the DVW and VFW. Since I am not a drinker I didn't think I would fit in.

The following is a poem I had published and was read at my church when we honored Veterans on Veterans Day.

(Continued)

Back Home Again

Life was good with my first job as a teen,
Then they lowered the draft age to eighteen.
The draft board soon pulled out my name,
And for me life was never quite the same.

Thirteen weeks of infantry training on Georgia land,
Made me into a rock-hard infantry man.
A furlough home I thought I would get.
Forget it, no furloughs would I ever get.

A ship was waiting to take me over the sea big and wide,
Thirty days later landing me down under on the other side.
Soon I made my first landing on the Island Good Enough,
Three months in two hospitals there was mighty rough.

Christmas came with a sad surprise,
As many soldiers didn't see another sun rise.
The next Christmas found me sleeping under ground,
As artillery shells were falling around.

Three landings and four birthdays went past,
Until the war come to an end at last.
Another ship took me back over the big and wide,
Heading back to the good old U. S. A. on the other side.

Oh what a glorious sight when land came in view,
Where I could start my life anew at age twenty two.
Now each year as we celebrate Veterans Day,
The sad memories of the war come into play.