

On December 7, 1941 an ordinary boy, Arthur Pranger, from Covington, Kentucky was listening to his console radio when the news of Pearl Harbor aired. Arthur, or Art for short, knew what the outcome of the devastating event could lead to, and that was only a matter of time before he received a letter requesting him to serve his country. His life, which included rides around town in his friend Bob Bailer's car and a drive through Devou Park, where teens could dance to the jukebox, changed forever on August 19, 1943, when he received the expected letter from the Armed Forces Induction Station telling him that he was now a soldier in the army of the United States. The letter requested that he leave everything but a minimum of civilian clothing and a, "Small traveling bag containing one suit of underwear, one extra pair of socks and necessary toilet articles including a face and body towel" (Pranger, Duty Calls 1). Before assembling at the local board on the assigned date of September 9, 1943, however, Arthur Pranger, number 35874300, needed complete necessary business such as claiming family allotment, securing life insurance, and filling out routine government paperwork. Upon their completion, Art said goodbye to his family and left for Ft. Thomas, Kentucky. From Kentucky, Private Arthur Pranger took a train to Texas and arrived at Camp Swift on September 15, 1943, where the army scheduled him to go through basic training. Once there he was assigned to the Chemical Warfare Service and a couple days later more specifically Company A, 86th Chemical Battalion (Motorized).

On the very same day that Art arrived at camp and got off the train, he received his equipment and began instruction by seeing some pictures on germ warfare. Private Art's first full day at Camp Swift he got right into serious training. "We marched with rifles and learned how to operate mortar.

We also learned how to run for cover from airplanes and shoot at them. We also had plane silhouettes to tell different planes apart from other ones. We also had map reading with instruments" (Pranger, September 20, 1943 1). On an average training day, the Private Art got up at six-thirty to the sound of reveille and went to bed at ten o'clock and he had very little time in between at first. As a soldier, Private Art received fifty dollars a month total, and out of that came life insurance, laundry, and bond, the rest was Art's, which he mostly to his mother. Through his training, he learned the characteristics of different gases, about using smoke and phosphorous bombs, and how to drive a jeep. On the gunner's exam, Private Art turned out to be quite a marksman, scoring 97 out of a possible 100 he was qualified as a first class gunner. To get into shape become used to walking, Private Art had to take long hikes with a backpack through rough terrain under all sorts of circumstances. "We went out on a 15 mile hike with a light pack but it still seems like a heavy pack to me. We marched on a road which was sand instead of dirt and in places we marched in soft white sand up to our ankles" (Pranger, September 23, 1943 1). At first, the hikes seemed hard, but Private Art's quickly became used to them, he remarks later, "Well we had a 15 mile hike yesterday and it wasn't anything at all" (Pranger, January 18, 1944 1). Once Art and the rest of his company had to drag their heavy artillery, "We went four miles today with mortar carts through ditches, up hills and all the rough country we could find - and when your pulling 500 lbs., it's a big load. Of course, there're 4 men pulling it but it's still heavy. What we pulled it through I don't think a horse would go through" (Pranger, October 8, 1943 1). On several occasions he would spend the night in the woods before returning to camp the next day from a hike on what is called a bivouac. "We had to march about a mile and a half with full pack, rifles, and mortar carts. Then we put up tents and slept on our raincoats. I had three blankets and there's room enough for 2 men. We each get 1/2 tent, then we pitch it with someone else and sleep together" (Pranger, October 7, 1943 1). On the bivouac the entire company was drilled on certain scenarios. Art explains, "They sprayed tear gas through the woods we were in and when we felt it we put our masks on" (1). None of the hard training would do any good though if the soldiers were not healthy and well feed. Private Art frequently went to scheduled appointments at the service's doctor. There he would get routine check-ups and shots to keep him healthy. The doctor examined Private Art's bones for any abnormalities along with his teeth for cavities.

He also received vaccinations so that he would not be susceptible to certain European diseases or ones that the enemy used as a weapon. The soldiers at camp ate three meals a day and had an admirable selection of food and beverages to eat and drink. "We have potatoes, meat, peas and carrots mostly and cocoa or cold water or iced tea to drink. For dessert we get pies, jello or pudding" (Pranger, October 1, 1943 1). There were only three meals a day however, no snacks in between, and with all the work Art did during the day he was always looking forward to mealtime. "Boy if you were in the Army you'd eat everything they gave you whether it looked good or not. It's pretty good though and I'm even hungry after I get through eating" (Pranger, October 18, 1943 1). Despite the long hikes, subjection to tear gas, and the rest of the gruesome training, however, later during training there were certain times when Private Art could relax and have fun. During some of his free time in the day, Art sometimes played volleyball, football, basketball, boxed, or threw around a medicine ball. The different companies would even hold tournaments and championship games to see what group played a sport best together. Some days the soldiers received permission to go see a movie and Private Art frequently made use of the privilege. On Sundays when Art was at camp, he could even attend church at ten-thirty, which he did often. On a whole, Private Art does not mind the training and remarks, "I'm alright and this isn't hard, it's just new and I'm having a lot of fun and I met these other new fellows and I know them all. I'm going to the show now with this other guy when I'm finished with this letter. I very seldom think about home" (Pranger, October 19, 1943). Private Art kept in close correspondence with family and friends and would often write several letters before going to bed each night while training. He would give them news of what he was doing and what he expected to do in the near future. Sometimes he would ask his mother to send items that he needed but could not get at camp; "Please send me about 15 clothes hangers, 3 bars of soap and some writing paper and envelopes" (Pranger, September 19, 1943). Private Art also wrote and received letters from his friends who enlisted in the armed forces to see how they were making out. He received several troubling mess

ages from his friend's mom, Mrs. Bailer, about her son Bob, reported missing. Private Art's letters to Mrs. Bailer are a great consolation to her and she writes, "I only hope and pray Bob will be found so he will know what a true friend he has" (Bailer, October 20, 1943). Robert was verified killed in action in November of 1943 just before Thanksgiving. On February 26, 1944 Private Art got word that they were to be moving over to Europe in about one month's time. In the first week of March Art writes, "We were alerted today so I guess we'll be moving out of this camp before long" (Pranger, March 7, 1944). Private Art's company a few days after moved to another camp, which at that place there was a good chance for P.O.E. (Port of Embarkation). "Whenever an outfit goes to a P.O.E. it usually goes to a staging area to get equipment and get ready then they wait until there called" (Pranger, March 9, 1944). Before long became three months however, but during that time training was light with only frequent inspections, and Private Art had plenty of free time. Art became impatient wanting to go oversea, but "[The sergeants and officers] don't even know what's going on themselves" (Pranger, September 25, 1943). Finally, on April 11, 1944, Private Art and the rest of his company took a five-day train ride to Camp Shanks on the east coast where the soldiers would depart for Europe. From New York harbor the company sailed across the Atlantic on the New Amsterdam to a port at Greenock, Scotland. Then the troops took a train to England and on May 6, 1944, Private Art wrote his first letter from Europe to his home in America. There was a large contrast in the way that people in Europe were living compared to people in America because of the war. Art describes England: "The kids around here are always asking for chewing gum and candy. They can't get that over here and everything is rationed. There's hardly any automobiles here and everybody rides a bicycle. They told us all about the bombings over here and this place has been hit quite a few times. There haven't been any bombings here for quite a while. [. . .] They hardly have any heat or hot water and it sure gets cold here. You sure are lucky to be in the States but you'll never know it till you've come over here. They sure are surprised when we tell them everything we get in the States (Pranger, May 6, 1944). By June 5, 1944, Private Art traveled from England to France and stood in the thick of the fighting. While moving after the Germans, Art travels through many towns in France and notices how many churches and cathedrals there are, and how all of them have been shelled and occupied by Germans using them as watchtowers. Everyday Private Art, along with all of the other soldiers, received a publication called Stars and Stripes. I told of the news and the updates of the war and how the fighting was going on in his sector. On December 4, 1944, the U.S. Army rewarded Private Art with the good conduct ribbon, which was for a year's service with the same outfit. While in Europe, the letters that wrote to his mother became less frequent because there was very little down time. Art wrote less to his friends and usually to his mother when he came back from the home front. "There's a rumor that we may go behind the lines for a rest and I'll be able to write more. Right now I have to watch out for certain things and be on the alert" (Pranger, July 5, 1944). Oversea Art was required to use a new type of stationery, which permitted the Army to utilize an innovative feature of World War II called V-Mail. Private Art had to write within a frame on a standard 8 1/2 by 11 inch piece of paper and on its way back to America the framed section was shrunk to a smaller dimension and put on microfilm. When the microfilm arrived in America, it was resized and then delivered to the correspondents. All of the letters sent from Art in Europe to America were also highly censored. Names of towns and any other identifying clues of Private Art's whereabouts were carefully blacked out. Art's involvement in the war and his obligation to fight did not mean that he could not enjoy a little of Europe. Upon his arrival in England, he stayed with an English family for some time. They showed Art the town and he became quite close to the family and on his way back from the war he stayed at the same family's home. After leaving to go back to the United States, the family wrote to Art's mom to assure her that Private Art was well. In France, a short furlough allowed him to go to a town and watch a movie and another in Belgium gave him the ability to visit some towns in Belgium as well and have a good meal with ice cream, something none of the other countries had at the time. Private Art fought vigorously during his stay in England until his feet became slightly frostbitten in February. To be treated, Art was sent on a hospital train to Paris where he stayed at a general hospital and then a few days later he traveled to England where he also stayed in a hospital being treated for yellow jaundice. After the hospital released him from being treated, Art went to a convalescent hospital, which was like basic training all over again. On April 26, 1945, Private Art remarks hearing rumors about the war being nearly over and that many of the German divisions surrendered. Finally, after three tears of fighting, the president officially announced VE Day on May 8, 1945. Private Art remembers, "I was there on VE Day and I thought it strange that they celebrated with fireworks. It would seem to me that there was enough fireworks while the war was going on. I thought it would have made more sense to celebrate it with silence" (Pranger, VE Day). On July 10, 1945, Private Art arrived back in the states and traveled to his original base near his hometown, Camp Campbell, Kentucky. Although required to remain at the base to train, its close proximity to Art's home allowed him visit his family on the weekends. Private Art returned home in September, his tenure in the service of the United States Army lasted exactly two years, two months, and twenty-nine days. Works Cited Pranger, Rose. "Private Art: A Work In Progress." Letter Archives. 25 Oct. 2002. 12 Feb. 2003. <<http://private-art.com>>. Pranger, Rose. "Private Art Remembers." VE Day. 25 Oct. 2002. 12 Feb. 2003. <<http://private-art.com>>. december ordinary arthur pranger from covington kentucky listening console radio when news pearl harbor aired arthur short knew what outcome devastating event could lead that only matter time before received letter requesting serve country life which included rides around town friend bailer drive through devou park where teens could dance jukebox changed forever august when received expected letter from armed forces induction station telling that soldier army united states letter requested that leave everything minimum civilian clothing small traveling containing suit underwear extra pair socks necessary toilet articles including face body towel pra

nger duty calls before assembling local board assigned date september however arthur pranger number needed complete necessary business such claiming family allotment securing life insurance filling routine government paperwork upon their completion said goodbye family left thomas kentucky from kentucky private took train texas arrived camp swift september where army scheduled through basic training once there assigned chemical warfare service couple days latter more specifically company chemical battalion motorized very same arrived camp train received equipment began instruction seeing some pictures germ warfare private first full camp swift right into serious training marched with rifles learned operate mortar also learned cover airplanes shoot them also plane silhouettes tell different planes apart other ones also reading with instruments september average training private thirty sound reveille went clock very little time between first soldier fifty dollars month total came life insurance laundry bond rest which mostly mother through learned characteristics different gases about using smoke phosphorous bombs drive jeep gunner exam turned quite marksman scoring possible qualified first class gunner into shape become used walking take long hikes with backpack rough terrain under sorts circumstances went mile hike light pack still seems like heavy pack marched road which sand instead dirt places marched soft white sand ankles hikes seemed hard quickly became used them remarks latter well mile hike yesterday wasn't anything january once rest company drag their heavy artillery went four miles today mortar carts ditches hills rough country could find when your pulling load course there pulling still heavy what pulled think horse would october several occasions would spend night woods before returning next hike what called bivouac march about mile half full pack rifles mortar carts then tents slept raincoats three blankets there room enough each tent then pitch someone else sleep together october bivouac entire company drilled certain scenarios explains they sprayed tear woods were felt masks none hard would good though soldiers were healthy well feed frequently scheduled appointments service doctor routine check shots keep healthy doctor examined bones abnormalities along teeth cavities vaccinations susceptible certain european diseases ones enemy used weapon soldiers three meals admirable selection food beverages drink have potatoes meat peas carrots mostly cocoa cold water iced drink dessert pies jello pudding october were only three meals however snacks between work during always looking forward mealtime army everything they gave whether looked good pretty good though even hungry after tough eating despite long hikes subjection tear rest gruesome however later during certain times relax have during some free time sometimes played volleyball football basketball boxed threw around medicine ball different companies even hold tournaments championship games group played sport best together some days soldiers permission movie frequently made privilege sundays even attend church thirty often whole does mind remarks alright this hard just having these other fellows know them going show this other finished this very seldom think about home kept close correspondence family friends often write several letters going each night while give news doing expected near future sometimes mother send items needed please send clothes hangers bars soap writing paper envelopes wrote letters friends enlisted armed forces they making several troubling messages friend bailer reported missing letters bailer great consolation writes only hope pray will found will know true friend robert verified killed action november just thanksgiving february word moving over europe month week march writes alerted today guess moving long march days after moved another place chance port embarkation whenever outfit goes usually goes staging area equipment ready then wait until called became months light frequent inspections plenty free became impatient wanting overseas sergeants officers know going themselves finally april took five train ride shanks east coast where departed europe york harbor sailed across atlantic amsterdam port greenlock scotland troops took england wrote europe home america large contrast people living compared people america because describes engl and kids around here always asking chewing candy over here everything rationed hardly automobiles here everybody rides bicycle told bombings over place been quite times haven been bombings quite while hardly have heat water sure gets cold sure lucky states never till come sure surprised tell states june traveled england france stood thick fighting while moving after germans travels many towns france notices many churches cathedrals been shelled occupied germans using watchtowers everyday along publication called stars stripes told news updates fighting sector december rewarded conduct ribbon year service same outfit wrote mother less frequent because little down less friends usually came back home front rumor behind lines able write more right watch things alert july overseas required type stationary permitted utilize innovative feature world mail write within frame standard inch piece paper back america framed section shrunk smaller dimension microfilm microfilm arrived resized delivered correspondents sent highly censored names towns identifying clues whereabouts carefully blacked involvement obligation fight mean enjoy little upon arrival stayed english showed town close back stayed same leaving united assure well france short furlough allowed town watch movie another belgium gave ability visit towns belgium meal cream something none countries fought vigorously stay until feet slightly frostbitten february treated sent hospital paris stayed general hospital later traveled hospital being treated yellow jaundice released being treated convalescent like basic again april remarks hearing rumors being nearly many german divisions surrendered finally tears fighting president officially announced remembers thought strange celebrated fireworks seem enough fireworks though made more sense celebrate silence july traveled original base near hometown campbell although required remain base close proximity allowed visit weekends returned tenure united lasted exactly years months twenty nine works cited rose work progress archives http rose remembers httpEssay, essays, term paper, term paper, term papers, term papers, book reports, study, college, thesis, dissertation, test answers, free research, book research, study help, download essay, download term papers