

A guy who happened to be lucky  
to have a ladder

# Gracia Wins Legion Of Merit

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joined the Spanish Army where he served for eight years until 1919 with the forces in Spanish Morocco in Africa. During those years, Arabs tribes, particularly the Riffs, were causing considerable trouble harassing caravans and destroying routes of travel, and Gracia who worked himself to the rank of captain in the native troops, saw plenty of action. He was discharged from the regular Spanish Army with the rank of sub officer which is equivalent to warrant officer in the U. S. Army.

In 1919 Sgt. Gracia joined the Spanish Merchant Marine. In September of the following year, he docked at New York and a few months later he was at Seattle, Washington. However, New York was Gracia's first American love and he returned there shortly, and immediately joined the Army. Gracia served in many camps before he was assigned to the 7th Field Artillery of the 1st Division January 5, 1921. He remained with the Division, famous for its fighting in this war and the World War, until 1940 when he was transferred here from Fort Ethan Allen, the permanent station of the artillery unit.

During his Army days with the 1st Division, Sgt. Gracia received a certificate of commendation from a commanding general and a letter

of commendation from the Secretary of War. The latter commendation was made in 1936 at Madison Barracks, N. Y., and was for an experimental gun section chest which Sgt. Gracia had constructed. The certificate from Gen. J. M. Cummings of the 18th Infantry Brigade was made in 1939 at Saranac, N. Y., where the artillery was on maneuvers and was for the distribution of supplies under the direction of Gracia, who was then a staff sergeant.

To Sgt. Gracia fell the task of organization of warehouses and the issuance of clothing to recruits immediately upon his arrival at Devens and so outstanding was his work in that field that high officials made yesterday's presentation. Under Sgt. Gracia's direction more than 500,000 recruits have been clothed at Devens, the peak day being in September of 1942 when 1800 recruits were given a full issue of clothing and 400 were given a part issue.

During the peak year of induction, 1942, more than \$21,000,000 worth of clothing was issued to recruits with the average being \$69,000 a day, or \$98 per man.

Sgt. and Mrs. Gracia and four children make their home on the Fort. Alfred Gracia, Jr., 17, the eldest, graduates from the Ayer High School this month and goes to Amherst College in July as an aviation cadet. Dorothy, 15, is a

student at the Ayer High School, while Margaret, 13, and Sally, 12, attend the Ayer junior high school.

The citation follows:

## CITATION FOR LEGION OF MERIT

"Master Sergeant Alfredo Gracia, ASN 6090471, Headquarters Company SCSU No. 1112, Reception Center Regimental Supply Office, Fort Devens, Massachusetts, United States Army. For exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services from 3 January 1941 to 30 June 1943. When the First Corps Area Reception Center was called upon to equip and clothe incoming inductees, Master Sergeant Gracia was assigned the duty of organizing the warehouse and of solving the multiple administrative details. Although limited to inexperienced assistants, he organized his unit with such efficiency that within two days stock sufficient to equip two thousand recruits was available and issue begun to personnel being processed. Coincident with this work, he trained a cadre for a temporary Recruit Reception Center at Camp Edwards, Massachusetts, to bring the 26th Infantry Division to war strength. He initiated many innovations in processing procedure that contributed in large measure to the success of the Regimental Supply Office and the Clothing Issue Warehouse."