

Hoosier Vagabond

By Ernie Pyle

SOMEWHERE IN ENGLAND, Oct. 24.—The 50 enlisted men now studying to be second lieutenants at the army's new officers' school over here are a fine-looking bunch, but there is none of the puppet-like uniformity about them that you find in a picked parade unit. They are all sizes, with all kinds of faces. You have freckle-faced Texans, guys from "Joicey" bookkeepers and farmers, tall one and fat ones. There are even a couple of bald heads. They are a good cross-section of America.

But one thing they have in common, and that is a pride in being chosen, and an eagerness for learning that I've never seen in students before. It occurred to me while watching their faces in class that it's a shame college students can't have the same hot desire to learn and progress. Several of them have told me, "We learned more here in two weeks than we did in two whole years in the army."

They work so hard that they've all lost weight since starting the school, but they really feel wonderful. Their schedule is divided about half-and-half between lectures and outdoor work.

Taught Unbending Strictness

YESTERDAY, FOR INSTANCE, they had drill and hard exercises in the morning, four successive classes—on army organization, army medicine, gas warfare and military commands—a stiff bayonet practice and then lunch.

After lunch they had two hours of indoor practice and lecture on the Browning rifle, outdoor machine gun instruction, some bayonet practice and more drill. After supper they had two hours of compulsory

study. That left them one hour before "lights out" to wash clothes, shine shoes, clean guns, etc.

No liquor is allowed in school, and they leave camp only on Sunday. But that is largely theory. For most of them need all day Sunday to get caught up on clothes-washing, letter-writing, studying and just generally recovering from the strenuous week.

They are taught unbending strictness, so they can instruct others the same way when they assume commands, but there is no dramatic viciousness in their schooling.

Some of 'Em Are Draftees

THE CANDIDATES wear the same clothes they wore as enlisted men. On all their jackets you can see the dark patch where their chevrons used to be. One boy told me he felt naked without those stripes on his sleeve.

On the left shoulder they wear an oval green patch with the letters "OCS" in yellow. That means "Officer Candidate School." On some of their covers they had painted the chevrons on with black paint, and of course they can't get that off.

Each day one of the candidates is appointed company commander. He has to act just as though he were already an officer, and give orders. Sometimes a man gets pretty embarrassed and stammering at first. When he has finished all the students are called on to tell what he did wrong.

Some of the students are draftees, in the army only a few months. Some are regular men with several years' service. One has been in the army 17 years.

A large detachment of regular soldiers is assigned to the school to do the ordinary work of a military camp. They do the cooking, the lawn mowing, the range-building, the map-making, the guard duty, and all those things.

If they do it well enough, maybe they will go to officers' school too some day.

Inside Indianapolis By Lowell Nussbaum

PROFILE OF THE WEEK: Police Major Herbert Roy Fletcher, better known as Cap Fletcher, this city's chief air raid warden, an old-time cop who came busting out of official retirement as soon as he found that they needed someone to boss the air raid setup. Cap Fletcher knows this city from top to bottom. He knows it from the viewpoint of a police veteran with 28 years' service from the lowest rank to next to the top. Since his retirement in 1937, he's been secretary of the Police & Firemen's Insurance Co.

At 62, he's husky and vigorous, still looks every inch the policeman. A little under 6 feet, he weighs about 240. He's full faced, wears glasses, has kindly blue eyes, a pleasant smile and gray hair that's getting pretty thin. He has very broad shoulders, walks with a rolling gait.

By nature, he's rather serious though genial. He's unusually shy and retiring for a veteran cop. An earthquake wouldn't excite him. He almost never swears—only when he's VERY angry.

Chops Holes in Ice

HERBERT FLETCHER'S one big obsession is fishing, at his cottage—Shangri La—at Shafer lake. Before he took up the air raid post, he spent almost every week-end up at the cottage, winter or summer. He's even gone so far as to chop holes in the ice to fish.

His cottage is on a point, right where Keene creek enters the lake, and his favorite fishing spot is on the end of his dock. Sometimes he baits two or three poles at a time and sits and watches them. Gets more action that way.

Funny part about it, though, is that although he

Washington

By Raymond Clapper

WASHINGTON, Oct. 24.—We have suffered so many military blows beginning with Pearl Harbor that those who take their medicine straight, without sugar coating, haven't had much that was pleasant to swallow. Finally the tonic comes in the remarkable performance of our flying fortresses. Regardless of whatever means the Germans may devise against them in the future, these heavy bombers are for the time being proving one of the major favorable surprises of the war.

Although some had earlier questioned the effectiveness of these bombers and called them flying targets, they are restoring our confidence while possibly introducing a new element in warfare that may have an important

effect on tactics, as the introduction of the tank did. Fortunately we are in heavy production on fortresses and the similar Consolidated Liberators so that we can press our advantage while it lasts.

The unexpected thing about the performance of these big four-motored bombers is their ability to knock down enemy fighters. No one was prepared to count so heavily on the bomber to destroy enemy fighters.

Reports Almost Unbelievable

THE LITTLE RAID showed that bombers cannot only take care of themselves, but can hand out deadly punishment. The unofficial reports passed were almost unbelievable. Both in Europe and in the Pacific the fortress has shown itself to be an animal with more lives than a cat, and able to bring down fighters while remaining in the air against the enemy fire. The fortress has taken the Jap zero and the German Fock-Wulf 190 alike for a ride.

We devised our heavy bomber originally to defend our shores, and designed it to fly high, fast and far, to meet the enemy in daylight far from our own shores and to turn him back, as OWI explains in its remarkable report on American aircraft.

We did not expect the enemy to reach us, or to fight him over his own territory. We devised a

bombsight of accuracy which is still regarded by airmen in Europe as almost unbelievable—so accurate that the saying is almost literally true that if you can see it you can hit it.

The British developed the slower, lower, bomber capable of carrying more bombs than ours for mass night bombing over Europe. But always the bomber over Europe was regarded as a big lumbering carrier of explosives to be dumped. It had either to slip in at night or surround itself with protecting fighters if it went out in daylight. The bomber, whether British or American, never was regarded as a destroyer of other aircraft to any such degree as the fortress and Liberator have become.

Note This One Caution

OUR BIG BOMBERS are so heavily armed that they can outrange approaching enemy fighters. In formation they are able to cover the approach of the enemy from any angle. Therefore the big bomber, with its devastating load, is now showing that it can range in daylight far out beyond the limits of short-range escorts hitherto regarded as necessary to protect bombers from enemy fighters.

The fighter plane has been regarded as the weapon to use against fighters. Will the big, heavily gunned bomber become also a major weapon in destroying the enemy air force in the air? That is the possibility that appears now.

One caution should be noted. Although the allied air campaign over Germany is showing possibilities beyond what many earlier thought likely, few who are qualified to judge believe that Germany can be defeated by air alone.

Precision daylight bombing will be able to damage production and transportation. Mass bombings are evidently having a depressing effect on the German population. There is reason to believe that this may become an important factor during the winter. Yet there is little likelihood that air attack, no matter how extensive, can reduce Germany without ground attack also.

But it begins to look as if we can count on the air for a great deal more than had been expected by those who argued that, since the German's couldn't break England by bombing, we could count on it for little against Germany.

My Day

By Eleanor Roosevelt

LONDON, England, Friday.—The past few days have been so filled with a variety of experiences that it is difficult to tell you about them. In the first place, I should explain that I find myself this evening in England because, a short time ago, Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, realized that we in the United States were just beginning to go through some of the experiences which the British people have undergone during the last several years. Her majesty felt that it might be valuable for me to see with my own eyes the work of the women in Great Britain, and so she wrote and asked whether I would care to come here.

I was assured that I would be given full freedom to see every-

thing in the way I felt would be most useful to me.

I realized at once this would also give me an opportunity to see our armed forces, which have been sent to this country in such great numbers. I hope very much that what I see may mean something to the mothers, wives and sweethearts of our men who are now stationed here. I hope, too, that the opportunity afforded to see the work which the women

are doing in Great Britain, may also be of use not only to our women at home, but also to the children who also have a share of the sacrifice which is made.

Now you have the background and the reason for the visit. There was some delay in my departure. The trip, across what has now become a very small pond indeed, was as comfortable and as delightful as possible.

No one knew I was actually arriving, in spite of newspaper rumors. Since Miss Thompson and I traveled under very unimaginative names and our bags looked like everyone else's, there was no easy method of identifying us. But, as I stepped out of the plane, I heard someone say, "Why, there is Mrs. Roosevelt!"

The countryside looks as green and as calm as ever, but every now and then in the city you come upon a heap of ruins and someone casually says, "a bomb fell there."

Our Ambassador, Mr. Winant, met me at the airport and on the train trip sketched for me the things which had been planned for the next few days. I shall, of course, do the more formal things that must be done, first. The king and queen met me at the station together with a number of officials, both British and American.

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