

Don't Fret, Mother

By Robert C. Ruark

NEW YORK. Aug. 9.—As Johnny goes marching off again in the new draft, it occurs that a passel of ladies are going to come down with the weeps, fearful of their treasure's future, anguished over the brutalizing possibilities of the military life.

A trick in the Army is not exactly indispensable to the rich full life, but it may be of some comfort to the parents to reflect that junior will probably be better off with his Uncle than if he stayed home with the folks. It can't hurt a good kid, may help a bad one, and will certainly seal the rambunctiousness of a chronic bad actor.

It is the natural tendency of the parent to blame the wicked old Army for all future developments in junior's career—bad ones, that is—and to deny it credit for any positive upturnings. The actual fact is that military life developed very few rogues from a standing start, and it reformed a lot of social freebooters.

The great majority of survivors of World War II are better men as a result of their service—mentally, physically and financially improved. And they remember their time with pleasant nostalgia.

Only Civilians Haven't Recovered

I HAD A CHAT once with Gen. Omar Bradley, when he was running the Veterans Administration, and Gen. Bradley remarked that the only group which hadn't effected a mass recovery from the war years was the civilians. The cold figures showed that the ex-GI had snapped back to a practically disgusting normalcy. He was busy working, paying bills, studying hard, breeding babies and contracting mortgages.

The professional 52-20 clubmen, the whiners, the sulkers and the crooks were around, but they were largely using the war as a justification of their instability. It is easy to be a loafer and a skulker when you can blame it on a war, and when you get a lot of help from ma, pa and the missus in excusing your own shortcomings. That fragmentary lost generation would have undoubtedly found another excuse had there been no selective service act.

It is interesting that the FBI figures on crime are fattened not by the G. I. or the ex-G. I., but by the civilian who just misses inclusion in the draft. Some of the teen-aged helpers who boosted the crime rate will be included in the new draft, and a majority of them will have the orneriness

speedily kicked out of them. The unrefractory will eventually be plucked out of the body, to ponder their evil doings in a nice clean cage.

Junior will learn, in some cases, to drink whisky, chase dames, shoot crap and cuss. But he would have learned it in any event, and a tendency to excess in any of these interesting pursuits is more easily controlled by a tough top sergeant, armed with the articles of war, than by a doting mother who sees her darling very seldom when he is at home.

If the little man is a buttheaded, selfish boy, it will take him a very short time to learn that the Army is not conducted solely for the purpose of pleasing him, and he will speedily learn to muffle his individualism under the common cloak of respect for authority. If the little man is shy, timid, with a propensity for being a mama's boy, he will get some healthy association with good rough guys, gaining confidence and maturity thereby. He will certainly meet less "bad company" than he will meet in the average grade school, high school or city street.

He'll Come Out a Grown Man

THERE IS something oddly ennobling in the formation of a unit from individuals. You can actually see the beauty of a shared effort, as it mounts. The Army calls it morale. I have seen a buffoon platoon become the company pride in eight weeks, and I have seen a foul-off gun crew develop into a crack outfit in three weeks, under firm guidance.

Your boy, mother, will meet some bums and some chicken-happy officers, and some injustice and some hard knocks and he will see some tough living and bad people and he will come out of it a grown man. That is, if he has anything worth preserving in him.

He will be well-fed, housed, clothed and generally well-treated, if he makes any reciprocal effort. The chances are you will be proud of him, when you get him back. But if he does come home mean and no-account, you can gain a wry comfort from the thought that the Army didn't do it to him. He had it with him all the time.

Ed Sovola, author of *Inside Indianapolis*, is on vacation.

A Confusing Week By Frederick C. Othman

WASHINGTON. Aug. 9.—The book says August is the deadly, dull month in the capital of the U. S. A. Don't you believe it. Another week like this last one, with a new sensation every hour on the hour, and I'll be cutting out paper dolls in my turpentine patch.

Understand that, politicians? Go easy with the red herrings and the beautiful blonde spuds who turn out to be stylish stout in rhinestone ear rings. And let's buy Federal Security Administrator Oscar R. Ewing a lunch box with a thermos bottle built in.

I guess the case of Oscar and the chef he borrowed from an insane asylum was what got me worrying about my own ability as a sniper of paper dolls. Mr. Ewing, as you know, is boss man of 11 different government outfits, ranging from the Food and Drug Administration to the Columbia Institution for the Deaf and to the Social Security Administration. A busy fellow, hasn't got time to go downstairs to the cafeteria for lunch.

How Come Oscar Borrowed Chef?

SO THE SENATE Appropriations Committee called him up for an investigation. You think those Senators were worrying about old age pensions, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, or even the Public Health Service?

Not the lawmakers. They wanted to know how come Oscar borrowed from St. Elizabeth's Hospital (one of the 12 agencies under him) a chef to cook his lunch every day in his private dining room at Social Security headquarters. The government pays the cook, one N. J. Kelly, \$3225 a year to fix the food for the mentally ill at St. Elizabeth's, but he spends five hours a day seeing that the big boss is properly fed. Or so charged the Senators.

Then Mr. Ewing held a press conference, but not in his dining room. The subject was his private chef. Perfectly proper, he said. When he and his associates eat what chef Kelly stirs up, they

can save time by talking business at lunch. And anyhow, said Oscar, he buys the food, himself, while the Social Security Agency pays St. Elizabeth's for chef Kelly's time.

That's what really slowed down Othman, who eats most of his lunches at the corner drug store.

Maybe I was in weakened condition because of the double-ply spy hunt, which kept witnesses and reporters alike shuttling between the House and Senate. One law giv'er demanded that presidential candidate Hank Wallace be called down to tell what he knew about pinkos in the old, plow-the-pigs-under Agricultural Adjustment Administration. Another charged that the government during the war shipped uranium and other atomic goo from an obscure airport to Russia.

And the witnesses kept calling each other liars in so many words. I wouldn't even begin to guess who's telling the truth about spies within the government.

Where's That 15 Seconds?

WHILE I was worrying about that, the Senators were tangling over the kind of housing bill they wanted. Sen. Robert A. Taft of Ohio was dead set against the bill he, personally, had a large part in writing. He pleaded with his fellow gentlemen not to pass it.

The argument got hot and it got heavy. Sen. Charles W. Tobey of New Hampshire was in charge of trying to put across the Taft bill over its author's opposition. When finally the argument was ended and it was time to vote, Sen. Tobey said:

"Mr. Chairman, will you please check your books and see whether I haven't 15 seconds more?"

Sen. Arthur H. Vandenberg of Michigan scanned the score board and said Sen. Tobey was mistaken. I don't suppose we ever will learn what the gentleman from New Hampshire intended to say in 15 seconds. Sen. Taft, in any event, won the argument. His bill was defeated. Next week, I hope, things will be a little less confusing.

'Heartbreak House' By Stephen Trumbull

SITKA, Alaska, Aug. 9.—"Heartbreak house" of the land of gold and hopes stands in quiet dignity here in this one-time site of Russian rule.

Officially, it is known as the Alaska pioneer's home. Here some 170 old men, some very old, sit quietly on the long porch or in the recreation rooms awaiting the last stampede.

They are, for the most part, the men who didn't find the gold, or who were swindled out of what they did find. Some stuck with it to the last, clawing their way through mountain passes, and digging more "dry" holes until the body no longer would respond even to the lure of gold.

Others are the men who turned to the almost-as-rugged, salmon fishing trade, until their old bodies no longer could take the icy waters and the biting winds of the bays.

Most tourists pass the home after a few admiring glances at the neatly trimmed lawns and the well-kept beds of dazzling flowers. They are off to see the totem pole park outside the city, the curio shops, the Greek church, old Alexander Baranoff's castle on the hilltop, or the bars. They don't want to be depressed by "an institution."

Amazing Lack of Bitterness

THE FEW WHO do scrap up acquaintances with the oldsters strolling about the place come in for a surprise. There's an amazing lack of bitterness here in this home of broken lives. Most of these oldtimers still have that thing that brought them here in the first place: The heart of a gambler. They bet a life against a fortune. They lost, so why weep?

There are no pleas for sympathy, no outstretched hands.

Alaska, rough and tough in some respects, has a soft spot in its heart for the men who left their dead mules and dead partners beside the trail. The territory gives them a care that would shame many a "stateside" institution.

Their home is modern, and spotlessly clean. The food is ample and cooked in a kitchen that would draw a nod of approval from the most hardboiled health inspector. There's a well-

equipped hospital, a doctor, nurses and attendants. The home has its little problems. Superintendent W. W. Knight grins as he tells what a time of it they have when they give one 96-year-old his bath. The old fellow never took 'em on the creeks, and he's sure they're killing him with this new fangled idea here. He yells bloody murder.

As one of the keenest memories on the days of the past, Knight introduced us to 78-year-old W. B. Perry, known through half a century of Alaskan and Yukon gold camps as Silvers. He is thin as a pick handle. Many attacks of snow blindness and sunburns across the fact from the brush of the trail finally robbed him of his sight. He's now totally blind, but there's nothing wrong with his mind or his sense of humor.

First Gold Found By Squaw

HE CAME IN '97, before the news of the Klondike strike had reached the "outside." He debunks many of the legends that have grown with the years. It wasn't for example, George Carmack who found that first rich strike. It was George's squaw. George had about reached the to-hell-with-it stage, but his squaw and another Indian plodded on for the "color" that started the historic stamped.

Silvers grins as he tells how Swift Water Bill Gates married three dance-hall sisters in a row. In his day, Silvers says he knew just about every dance-hall gal that ever hit the country. Some of them, he says, were right nice folks.

He knew Tex Rickard, worked at various times for him and with him, and liked him. Of another American who came up here to get the start of what later was to be a vast fortune, Silvers says the guy was a louse and it's too bad no one got around to hanging him.

In the handshake of goodbye the oldster was complimented on his memory. There was a thoughtful pause, and he said with a quiet dignity:

"Yes, old men often have excellent memories. And so often it would be better for them if they could forget."

New Playground

By Fred Hubbard

BRISBANE, Australia, Aug. 9.—A whole new playground for tourists—particularly free-spending Americans—is being developed on Australia's great barrier reef island.

Planning to grab a big chunk of the rich world tourist trade, Aussies are confident the reef will do the job. I'm inclined to agree, after a visit to the reef myself.

The reef, which stretches 1000 miles along Queensland's coast, certainly has been richly endowed by nature with plenty of natural "oomph."

"Reefing" is more interesting.

TO LOOK DOWN through 60 feet of clear blue water and watch brightly colored finny friends take the bait is something that ought to thrill the most hardened fisherman.

"Reefing" is perhaps even more interesting. By walking out on the reefs at low tide, visitors can see beautiful live coral formations, marine life at home, and brilliant shells of every shape and description.

While the Aussies have a potential tourist bonanza in the reef's many natural wonders, however, bad planning is souring most of its visitors today.

At island resorts the accommodations are quite, and entertainment facilities are lacking. Resort personnel, moreover, seems to give what passes for service most grudgingly.

Shortages Slow Efforts

REALIZING these conditions, several Australian promoters are now industriously trying to build up the resorts along United States lines. Ultimately, they hope to spend several million dollars on first-class development.

Their efforts are being slowed by shortages of building materials. Luxury hotels, for example, are scarcely past the blueprint stage. And until this problem is overcome, reef resorts are due to remain vacation havens for rugged individuals.

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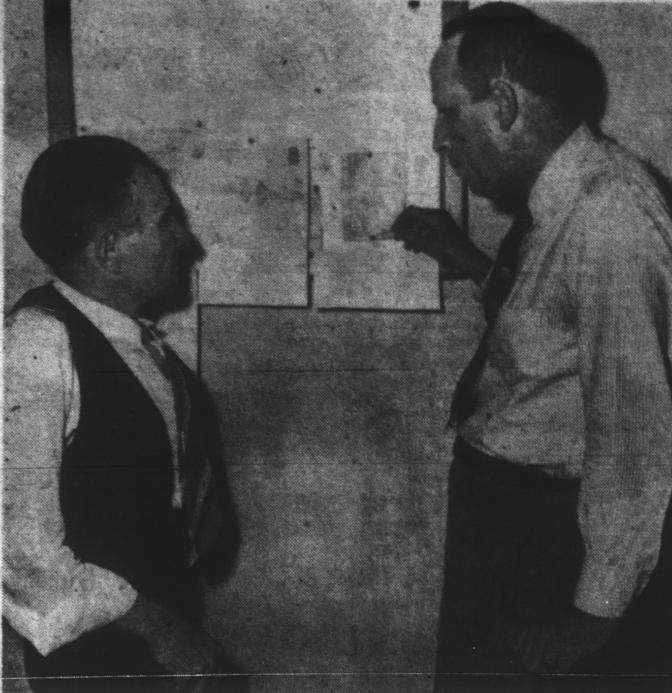
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Crippled Hoosier Wins Success And Aids Others To Achieve Goal

(Picture Story by Victor Peterson)



REFUSED TO QUIT—Disabled in infancy, Floyd S. Cunningham (left) today shows the path of success to other handicapped persons at his watchmaker's school in Corydon, Ind. As school administrator he has employed Charles Rominger (right), the man who started him on his way to self-sufficiency 15 years ago.

WITH EXACTING CARE—John Young, Louisville, painstakingly completes the engraving on his class ring which he will wear at graduation from Cunningham's Horology School, Inc. Mr. Young is but one of the all-veteran student body. Like many of the enrollees he is disabled. One leg is amputated below the knee.

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