

SNARLS FROM AN OLD - TIMER

By H. B.—DEML

The vile attack on me, last week in the Camp Adair Sentry, and on the first page at that, will be answered, here and now.

To begin with, the man who wrote it, the mysterious E.A.B., is what Huteh, or The Little Flower, or the esteemed Mayor of New York City, would call a

And I should like to ask E.A.B. if he knows the present whereabouts of an old soldier with the same initials and serial number as his, who in the other war drove an ambulance, and was taking drunks home in it when he should have been carrying patients to the hospitals, until the drunks fell out of the ambulance and were so badly injured that they did have to be taken to the hospitals anyhow?

Well, I guess that proves there's nothing to the slander that I learned the "most masterful of all military maneuvers in World War I," that of getting to the head of the mess line every time. The truth is that I've never been at the head of a mess line.

Recently, at reveille, a sergeant with a sadistic sense of humor took us down into a field and then suddenly shouted "Scram" or "Company dismissed," so that there was a blind, headlong rush to the kitchen, and on that occasion I did get to be second in line, because of course these youngsters couldn't run as fast as I could.

Usually, though, I'm well back in the line and in a way I'm pleased that E.A.B. libeled me (now, I won't bring suit — paper hasn't any money), because it does give me an excuse to hold forth about the real Army curse—that of waiting in line for practically everything.

"Hurry and wait," an expression coined by a tent mate, Maurice Wedum, would make a title for an Army theme song. You rush to get in line and then you wait, and the ones who are willing to wait and do nothing naturally get there first. The result of this vicious practice is a tremendous waste of man hours and I wish The Camp Sentry would get up a scientific chart to prove it.

But I have a remedy, at least in the case of the mess line and a few more. Adopt the neat little scheme of the bus lines in Paris—Paris when her heart was warm and gay, as the song goes. On a pole at every bus stop was a kind of box from which every prospective passenger pulled, on arrival, a slip of paper bearing a number.

The numbers came out in order, increasing one by one as our serial numbers do, and when a bus pulled up the conductor admitted the passengers by number.

Why couldn't that method be followed in camps? The first soldier up in the morning would go to the kitchen and receive, from somebody on K.P., a slip of paper marked No. 1. Then he could finish dressing, make his bunk, and do whatever else he had time to do before the cook beat on a tin pan, officially announcing that chow was ready. The soldiers with the lowest numbers would go in first.

Thus there would be no long line waiting even before chow was ready, and the early birds would be rewarded. It might improve the disposition of sergeants and corporals, because they would have an easier time routing out the sleepy lads. And it would be possible for me to make a little money on the side, because I'm always awake before first call, and up, too, and for consideration I would quietly awaken whoever was willing to pay me for it, before reveille. Cer-

tainly the same system would work at other meals, although that is less important.

On Saturday, hiking toward Mary's Peak, and hoping for a lift but not thumbing for it, I was picked up by Forrest (Red) Clarkson, who was rushing away from Oregon State Penitentiary as fast as his car would carry him. Not escaping, though, for he is a guard and was only on a fishing trip.

He told me that all day people had been telephoning The Portland Oregonian, and saying that Keith "Luke" Crosswhite, a lifer in the penitentiary, should not be permitted to pitch for the Salem Senators of the Western International league either in league or semi-pro games.

These calls, he said, were the result of the newspaper's story that Crosswhite would be taken to a game, under guard, and would pitch, under guard.

"Crosswhite is unique," the guard told me. "He never played ball until he was sent to prison. Then he took it up strenuously, practicing four hours a day and becoming, in my opinion, the greatest living baseball pitcher.

"What will it do to him if he can't play ball as was planned?" I asked.

"I'm a guard, so I can't talk about it, but I can quote others who know him. They say that it will change him from a model prisoner, which he is now, into a desperate one who will kill a guard if he can."

While we were talking the guard drove past the road that leads up Mary's Peak. So when I got out I had to walk back, uphill, a mile or so, and then walk up hill, almost steadily, to the mountain top. I climbed from an altitude of below 1,300 feet to an altitude of 4,057 feet, the highest point in the Coast range.

In the little house at the summit I met Kenneth Walker, recreational director, and Mrs. Walker, his wife, fire and plane watcher. They invited me to supper, but the sun was sinking through a cloud-sea broken by dark islands and promontories which really were other mountain tops, and in the east the white peak of Mt. Hood was disappearing in the evening haze, so I thought I'd better be getting down.

Luckily I got back to the road before the last cars had quit the mountain top parking space, and I was picked up and carried all the way to Corvallis, in time for a late meal and a haircut before catching the 11 p. m. bus back to camp.

The barber was Erwin Falk, also a war veteran. In the other war he was in the 13th Infantry, protecting Brooklyn's waterfront. He thinks some of the fellows from New York talk too continuously and argue too much. So do I think that.

On Sunday morning early I was sitting in the headquarters office of my outfit, sort of getting oriented, when I saw a sight that touched my heart. I saw a sergeant, name of Scott Miller, pick up a broom and proceed to sweep the floor. The sight affected me so that I could not go on looking. I hurried out and went to church.

It was August 9 and my daughter's birthday and I was thinking of her and of a Bible verse that I had quoted in the diary that I write for a New York paper. So I was much moved by it when Chaplain Jorgenson stepped forward and read that very passage. Perhaps it is out of order, but many of the soldiers whom I'm living

with are not much older than this daughter of mine, so I'm quoting my piece to give you an idea of the way fathers feel:

"It is Martha's birthday. She is 18. So it is 16 years since I pushed her baby carriage up Fifth avenue, 15 years since she called the steam shovel an 'upsy-daisy mud,' and 14 years since she sat on my knees in Carengie Hall and afterwards took a stick, at home, and waved it, and cried, 'I'm playing Toscanini.'"

"In those years it seemed to me that parenthood had a godlike quality, because Martha's well-being was so completely within our control and it took so little to make her happy. I remember writing verses about it:

"They trust us so, the little ones, Who cannot walk alone; We are as gods when children thrust Their hands into our own..."

"Now that time is past, not because I am across the continent from Martha and not because I am a soldier, in my country's service through this war, but because Martha is a young woman and her happiness must depend on herself, on other people, and perhaps on men who are younger than her dad.

"Yes, about all that a father can do, when his girl grows up, is to stand by ready to listen, whenever she has joys or troubles to confide, and to foster such a surely tender relationship that she will turn to him in need.

"Therefore I am thinking, today, of my Uncle Tom's favorite lines in the Bible. They are in my Service Prayer Book and are taken from the eighth chapter of Romans, and they go like this:

"For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present nor things to come,

"Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord."

"To me there is something poignantly beautiful about faith like that, and today, if it isn't presumptuous, I wish that Martha may have it all through the years to come, and that in a minor way at least it will include assurance that my love for her is steadfast and bridges time and distance.

"The role of god has been so sweet that I would not surrender it altogether, and if most of my power is gone the caring remains undiminished. A very personal piece this is, in my old soldier's diary, but I know that it will be understood by parents who have been writing to me about their sons."

Staff Sergeant Takes Bride Sunday Morning

A wedding of military interest was performed last Sunday morning, August 9, at 9:45 o'clock, when Miss Mary Ballestrazze became the bride of Staff Sergeant Ernest Fama, at a post chapel. First Lieutenant Victor J. Schwar, chaplain, officiated at the ceremony and conducted the Catholic mass which followed.

First Sergeant Robert E. Cutler and Mrs. Cutler were the attendants and several men from Sgt. Fama's company were onlookers.

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Texas Romance Ends in Wedding Here Saturday

Miss Mary Margaret Mulholland of Fort Worth, Texas, and Staff Sgt. Francis Herbert Thompson of Troy, New York, were married Saturday afternoon at Camp Adair regimental chapel T-3-723. Chaplain Gerard Paul O'Keefe officiated.

The couple first met at Camp Walters, Texas, and the ceremony marked, almost to the day, the fourth anniversary of that meeting. Cpl. Norman W. Penny was Sgt. Thompson's best man for the occasion with Sgts. Pivetz and Lawrence F. Bendowske as witnesses. Sgts. Dan Woolery, Mell Stallings and T. S. Hancock were special guests at the ceremony.

Unusual sidelight is the fact that the bride and groom, as well as the best man, witnesses and special guests were all located at Camp Walters, Tex., before being stationed at Camp Adair.

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