

Xmas Was Nice Except For That Damn Samovar

By T/Sgt. William Hanson
Service Company

Christmas was wonderful—yes, wonderful!

Everyone and his relatives sent us something to unwrap, and we guessed what was in every package via the shake and argue method. That is, every package except one. This had a grotesque shape, was heavy and contained no holes which would permit peeking.

The package contained quite a handsome object. It looked like the combination of a coffee urn you see at ten cent store food counters and the rack that holds the spare tire on my Chevrolet. I gasped with delight and feigned understanding knowledge until some more honest soul present asked: "What is it?"

I faltered and stuttered. My wife came to my rescue with, "probably a gravy boat." Examination, however, revealed this item had no utility as a gravy boat, because it had two little holes right below the spout, if that horn-like object is a spout. Any attempt to dispense gravy would result in a spattered vest and a crash. The weight would require two hands and both knees to maintain control, and the metal did not appear to be the type which could withstand heat.

We called one of our neighbors, an expert on antiques and bric-a-brac. He appraised my gift, drew up his courage and pronounced: "This is a samovar." No one disputed his decision, so he elaborated. "This may come from the old Spanish or perhaps Portuguese tureen line. It's practicability, of course, is subordinate to its value as a thing of beauty."

I decided to exchange the thing for something practicable. I took it to an antique store. The proprietor asked: "What is it?" I acted offended and told him if he didn't know his own business I would certainly visit his competitors. His only competitor was the junk dealer down the street. He appraised the item for its metal value at approximately \$2.50 but stated he'd rather trade it for something in his store. This pleased me. I could hardly write my friend (?) and tell him I'd sold his gift to a junk dealer for \$2.50; still I might tell him they were overstocked with samovars and I had exchanged it for a needed item. I finally wound up with a used radio. We already possessed two radios and this third one, on experimentation, proved to offer no more melodious output than a parliament of hens gathered at dawn. Knowing my wife would not be pleased, I went to the nearest electric shop to barter.

When I stated my mission, attendants lost composure and fled for the manager, who upon scrutinizing the radio, pronounced it in need of a new condenser, which item he informed me might be procurable again ten

months after the war. He suggested I find a more gullible customer. I found another junk dealer's establishment, determined to accept cash. On my entry into the shop, I realized I had made an error. The owner could not possibly have any money; he apparently had not eaten for at least six months. However, he looked the radio over and offered me 50 cents for it. Now I am no businessman, but it was obvious I stood to lose two fish, so I refused. I repaired again to the place from which the radio had been procured and told the dealer I wanted to make another trade. He looked disappointed but consented. I explored his shop and finally wound up at the grab bag. The only hazard involved was that no selection was afford. You picked out a package and the deal was closed.

I picked up a box of some size and carried it home. We opened it hoping it might be a new head for the kitchen mop. It wasn't. You probably guessed it—We were again owners of one undated, heavy metal object which may or may not be a samovar. We stuck it in the cellar and wrote a "thank you" note to the donor. We hope to get even with him next Christmas.

Notes From B-52



By Pvt. J. D. DeMent

C rations for breakfast, and Company B was off on their 23-mile hike. An all-day hike brought the boys back into camp, tired but conscious of another successful mission.

Following floating bridges came fixed bridges, H-10 and the Bailey bridge. The third platoon finishing their part of the Bailey, worked for a short while on the steel panel floating bridge—25 tons. This was the first time this bridge had been worked on by any company in camp and all concerned agreed it to be a more backbreaking task than the British Bailey type, but very effective, especially for longer stretches of water.

When this company arrived at Camp Abbot, the first things that were heard were that it got cold in Oregon. This came true. The second was that we'd have to crawl under live machine gun fire, and Friday of last week this, too, came true, as the boys went through the infiltration course. As usual the latrine rumors had it worse than it was. The bullets were alive however; there's no mistake about that.

Hiking was the fad of the



FIREWORKS WITH A STING

This pyrotechnic-like demonstration is used by the Chemical Warfare Branch at Camp Abbot to show soldiers of the Engineer Replacement Training Center various uses of white phosphorus in modern warfare. The chemical, which burns furiously and is almost impossible to extinguish, was used successfully in the Salerno campaign and in Sicily to "burn" enemy soldiers from fox holes and to set up smoke screens.

week. A 12-mile reconnaissance was made Friday. Enjoyed the picnic lunch.

B-52nd's songbirds got a chance to show their stuff at the "Victory Parade" broadcast. They sang the "Camp Abbot Fight Song" and the "52nd Battalion Fight Song." From all reports, it was okay.

Noticed the third platoon making pictures, including some of their two signs in front of their door. That platoon hasn't done badly. Winner of rifle marksmanship plaque, breakfast in bed for the third squad, and now in fisticuffs the results stand: First—first squad, third platoon; Second—third squad, third platoon; third—second squad, third platoon. This platoon is commanded by Lt. Earl Wilson. Sgt. Lawrence is sergeant and Cpls. Kiltner and Dixon complete the cadre.

Many of us were carried back to roller coaster days as we sailed down the overhead trolley line on the rigging application course.

Kansas City (CNS)—Police arrested four boys driving an ancient sedan on a charge of theft of auto accessories. Here's what was on the car: 11 musical horns, a door bell with cathedral chimes, seven tail lights, headlight shields, three extra bumper guards, two amber spotlights, two ordinary horns, a model airplane radiator cap, three coon tails and two American flags.

War bonds and stamps build ships and bombers. Buy them now.

Here's How Term 'Retreat' Came Into Army Usage

If you've wondered why the evening formation in the army is called retreat, here's the answer, according to the American Legion who had the Army War College look it up in its ancient toms. Here's what the records of Her Majesty's forces, British, had to say:

"It is ordered in Her Majesty's Regulations for the Army, P. 253, 'that The Retreat is to sound or beat at sunset; after which no trumpet is to sound, or drum to beat, in the garrison except at watch setting and Tattoo, and in case of fire or other alarm.' The word is only the French retraite, signifying the retirement of the men from their daily duties, or perhaps originally to their quarters. This is the only significance of the word in military parlance, the word Retire being always used to express a backward movement."

Research went farther, into British and French military lore, and found that in early days it was the custom for the rifle and drum corps to march through the camp streets and for each soldier to "repair to his tent or quarters" and remain therein. Later the custom changed to a formation while the flag was lowered. The use of "Retreat" in this sense was found as far back

as 1689 in British documents, and in 1779 in the United States which followed many British army customs.

New Chief Nurse Assigned Here

First Lt. Louise Phillips, ANC, has reported for duty as chief nurse, Station Hospital, Camp Abbot. Lt. Phillips came here from a hospital at the Marana, Ariz., Air Base and previous to that assignment had been stationed at a general hospital at Modesto, Cal.

The new chief nurse is a native of Georgia, is a recent bride, having married a lieutenant in the Air Corps shortly before coming to the ERTC, and is a reserve officer in the ANC with approximately four years of regular army service to her credit.

Steinbeck Book Proves Popular Library Choice

"Of Mice and Men", by John Steinbeck, is one of the most popular books in the Camp Abbot library, according to Miss Carolyn Paddock, librarian. The book has been read by 13 people since Dec. 13. Another favorite is "Kings Row" which is trailed closely by "This Above All," and "The Robe". "See Here, Private Hargrove", is also much in demand, but the two books most asked for, and which are usually out, are "Claudia" by Frank and "Thirteen Women", by Tiffany Thayer.

Pass The ENGINEER To Another Abbotman—He'll Appreciate It.

Male Call

by Milton Caniff, creator of "Terry and the Pirates"



Combat Report

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