

# Two Local Women Give Korean Aid

By RUTH KING

Korea has a "Boy's Town" patterned after the Father Flanagan orphanage for boys at Omaha, all because U.S. fighting men and real-estate men in America have warm hearts and generous hands.

And here in our town are two women who almost single-handedly have sent more than a ton of clothing to the helpless victims of war in Korea, who are still, after the armistice is signed, sorting, mending, washing, packing, more boxes of garments to be sent away.

Mrs. Gerald C. Gwyn, 238 Fulton Street, and her daughter, Mrs. Joy Ovgard, are the unheralded heroes of the town who handled the huge undertaking in the Gwyn home.

It all began back in the early days of the Korean conflict when men of the 2nd Infantry Division of the U.S. Army, which included the son of Mr. and Mrs. Gwyn, advanced across the stricken land, were appalled by the hundreds of young children, adrift and hungry.

### 'FRIENDSHIP HOME'

The sympathetic GIs gathered these homeless waifs together in a crude shelter of mud, grass and bits of Army canvas. That first primitive orphanage became known as Friendship Home.

Hordes of these naked, bloated little ones hung about the camp, became mascots for the men, helped clean army quarters, begging food. Parents of many had been killed or had simply disappeared in the maelstrom of war.

Military regulations forbade distribution of army rations to the refugees so the GIs dug deep into their pay for dollars to feed the army waifs. The dollars piled up as pay days rolled around and soon amounted to thousands in army script.

### FOOD BARTERED

Huge quantities of rice and native Korean vegetables were bartered for, watchful American eyes guarding against "cheating" by Korean gardeners. When the supply of local rice ran low, more was imported from the U.S. under the civil affairs section of the Army and cooked in the native way with no seasoning.

The young wards learned the use of spoons as readily as they picked up GI slang. They thrived on full stomachs and big brother

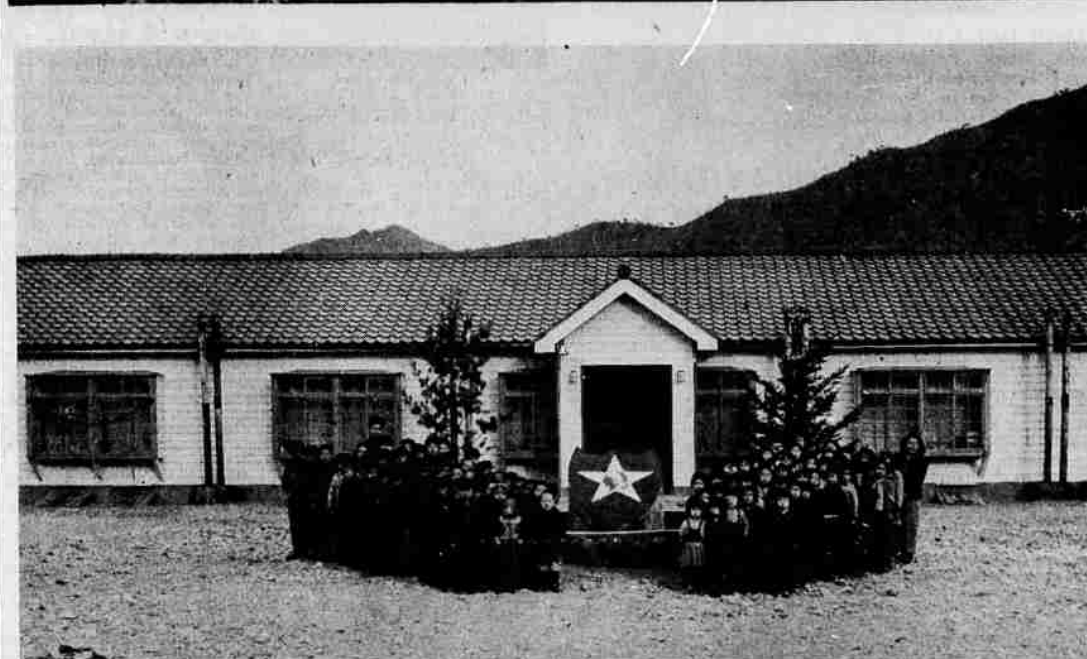
affection but clothes just didn't exist in their land and winter was on the way. Again the men of the Second met the challenge. They wrote home. Here it was Mrs. Gwyn and Mrs. Ovgard received the call for immediate help, and they went into action, hiring for the "Battle of the Britches." Graydon helped with the distribution in Korea often traveling 50 miles or more to pass out the clothing.

Slow at first. To start, garments came in a sluggish trickle, but a word here, a word there brought a flood of garments that overflowed the Gwyn home. The two spent long hours, day after day at the task. Then the Conger-Fairview Home Extension Unit and a few neighbors came to the rescue and helped move the mountains of garments on their way.

In a few short weeks after the word reached here, shoes and shirts, pants and coats from Klamath Falls were trotting about Korea and just to prove they reached Korea shores, Sgt. Gwyn, now discharged and studying at OTI, will show motion pictures of the arrival of some of the shipments at the Congregational Church, Friday, Nov. 30 at 8 p.m. The public is invited.

That early primitive orphanage soon gave way to a modern, frame building built with GI dollars and staffed by a Korean doctor, three women nurses and a handyman.

CHRISTMAS When Christmas rolled around, men of the Second played Santa Claus, to the most surprised little



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guys who ever looked at a St. Nick in army garb.

The young guests, showered with gifts brought from Japan, were overwhelmed but they dived into cake, sticky with frosting and popped balloons with gusto.

They were scrubbed and inoculated, taught sanitation and how to sleep in a bed; were sent to a small Korean school near their neat home to learn the Korean alphabet.

(Those returned to parents, located after the fighting ebbed, ran away and returned to the orphanage.

Then the end of the war came. The armistice was signed. GIs were rotated home and it became necessary to work out some plan to make Friendship Home independent of the 2nd Division.

That has now been accomplished.

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according to a recent letter to Mrs. Gwyn and Mrs. Ovgard from James U. Cole, M.Sgt., who said:

(Continued on Page Six)

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