

Education Of Negro Soldiers In World War II

(Presented by Mildred Stephenson
During Negro History Week)

Almost 1,200,000 American Negroes entered the Armed Forces to engage in World War II. They stepped into the most severe testing ground of all times, a period of history that was to tap their talents and stimulate their thinking.

Training opportunities were thrown open to people who had never before enjoyed them, and employment shot to new heights. Negroes shared more fully than ever before in the American economy. For Negroes in the Armed Forces, this meant, along with the whites, schooling and mechanical skills for the mechanical war.

Commanding General Army Service Forces, General Somerwell had warned America: "We can lose this total war on the battle front as a direct result of losing it on the educational front. Education is the backbone of the army." His word was heeded by the Armed Forces when they discovered that there was an alarming number of illiterates and unskilled people among the men turned over to them for training.

Selective Service, at first, did not regard this as a great problem, but later the demands of the war became critical, and it was realized that the Armed Forces might lose the service of three-quarters of a million of physically fit people because they were illiterate. It was decided to salvage these people for war.

This decision led to the historic attack on illiteracy. Tens of thousands of service men, white and Negro, were sent to school. Subject matter was made vivid for the students by relating it to their military duties, and they had specially prepared books, such as "The Army Reader" which described in simple words a day with "Private Pete."

A full instructional day was planned for all students in an environment free from care. Food, housing, exercise, recreation, and rest were assured. Individual instruction was made possible through small classes.

Many Negroes worked in the Army Engineer Corps, a branch of the service that requires skilled craftsmen. Among every thousand Negroes inducted in one period, there were approximately six auto mechanics, three carpenters, less than one plumber, and almost no draftsmen, machinists, and weld-

ers. By the time an engineer corps could be ready for duty, it required the services of 48 mechanics, 175 plumbers, 5 draftsmen, 8 machinists, and 8 welders.

Their army experiences and the encouraging prospect of being able to study without charge under the G. I. Bill of Rights stimulated many Negro soldiers to plan for more education after the war. Vocational training helped to create the feeling of optimism. Many Negroes expressed themselves as believing they would have better jobs after the war.

The Army brought all kinds of

Touring Players Present "The Corn Is Green"

Paul L. Pruden '51

On January 28, the College presented, in Moore Auditorium, the All New York production of "The Corn Is Green." The play, under the direction of Toni Merrill, was enacted in a manner typical of Broadway.

The action of the play took place in a small village in a Welsh countryside, the industrial heart of a progressive coal mining area. Knowledge of the inhabitants was limited to coal mining. Children, at a very early age, were sent into the mines, instead of schools where they became old men in a few short years.

Miss Moffat, portrayed by Margaret Campbell, was especially commendable in her interpretation of the elderly school teacher who was determined to educate the children in spite of obstacles. She was well fitted for the role and made a lasting impression upon the audience with her humorous antics, as well as her serious attitude toward the task confronting her. Timothy Gordon, as John Gormery, was an able assistant for Miss Moffatt. The manner in which he acted will long be remembered by those who saw the show. The comedy by the Squire, Betty Watty, and her mother. Mrs. Watty kept the play moving on an even level. The parts were heart-warming and the audience laughed with them and sighed with them. They enjoyed and got satisfaction from the triumphs of the characters.

Phillip Abbott, as Morgan Evans, supplied the drama and suspense. He was taken from the mines, educated by Miss Moffatt, and given a scholarship to Oxford.

men together for every profession and occupation, from every class and caste, from every part of the country, town, village, and farm. It afforded many soldiers their first opportunity to travel.

Many veterans had a great deal in common. They learned new skills, tapped fresh sources of pride, and drew inspiration, in spite of some segregation, from the advances of their people on the home front. They had reached the point, in short, where they would lay strong claim to equality of public treatment and a greater share in America's tremendous wealth.

Social Welfare Problems Presented At Assembly

Edith L. George '51

"The need for maintaining a better emotional and physical resource balance in human welfare lies largely in keeping the family unit intact," Mr. John R. Larkin of the Public Welfare Department of the State of North Carolina told an attentive audience on February 4.

"The reason why some of us are particularly interested in human resources," said Mr. Larkin, "is that we are ignorant of the facts concerning conditions of our welfare existing among our race today—conditions which we will have to fight to succeed as a race. Not only is poverty the great enemy, but ignorance and other social handicaps are taking their toll upon the less fortunate members of our race."

"Man," said Mr. Larkin, "is born with two distinctive abstract traits, instinct and emotion. These two traits, if reserved to the fullest extent, can produce a normal or above the normal balance in nature. But, if at any time, either of these becomes psychologically or physiologically interrupted, the life processes of the individual become upset."

Looking to the future, Mr. Larkin predicted that the only and best known weapon to use in the conservation of human resources is education. Not only for a fortunate few, but education is a necessity for all, if we are aiming to maintain a sufficient and well-organized population. Education is the only thing that will help our people, socially, economically, and physically. "Natural resources can wait," concluded Mr. Larkin, "but we must remember human resources can not."

What Would Happen?

Mildred Stephenson '51

If Alice were a "Day" instead of a "Knight"?

If George were a "Woman" and not a "Mann"?

If Ruby were a "Hook" and not a "Bates"?

If Annie Bertha were a "Mountain" and not a "Hill"?

If Lucy were a "Blackhead" and not a "Whitehead"?

If Della were a "Parker" and not a "Miller"?

If Willie were a "Bicycle" and not a "Carr"?

If Esther were a "Knife" and not a "Faulk"?

If Delores were a "Cadillac" and not a "Hudson"?

If Hazel were a "Cherry" and not a "Berry"?

If Jimmie were a "Rider" and not a "Walker"?

If Velma were a "Ceiling" and not a "Wall"?

If Luther were a "Gallop" and not a "Trotter"?

If Martha were a "Bandage" and not a "Gause"?

If Bettie were a "Peace" and not a "Quarrel"?

If Thelma were a "P-38" and not a "Balmer"?

If Margaret were a "Softie" and not a "Harty"?

If Bernice were a "Brickhouse" and not a "Woodhouse"?

If Elizabeth were a "Biglowe" and not a "Littlejohn"?

Dedication Corner

Velma Williams dedicates to Willie Lamb "To the End of Time."

Robert Poole to Alberta James "Why Did You Do It?" and "My Greatest Mistake."

Wiley Neal to S. T. C. "Long Gone."

Betty Raynor to Thomas Hicks "I Love You So Much It Hurts."

Frances Powell to Richard Holley "I'll Always Be in Love With You."

Margaret Harty to Ernest Pitts "My Heart Belongs to You."

James Wilkes to Alberta James "I Love You, Yes I Do."

Sterling Perry to Bessie Rogers "Always."

Aggie Alston to a city admirer "My Heart Belongs to You."

Riley Mackey to A. P. M. "I Don't Care Who Knows."

Mildred Stephenson to Paul Pruden "Long About Midnight."

Wiley Neal to Delores Hudson "A Gold Mine in the Sky."

—Rosita Hodge '51