



MR. WINKLE GOES TO WAR

By THEODORE PRATT

W.N.U. RELEASE

THE STORY THIS FAR: Forty-four-year-old Wilbert Winkle, who operates a repair shop in the alley back of his home, is notified by his bank that he is in U.S. He breaks the bad news to his demure wife, Amy, who now hates to part with him. Mr. Winkle is sent to Camp Squire, a thousand miles from home, where he meets Mr. Tinker, man of his own age who wants to avenge a nephew killed at Pearl Harbor. After graduating from Motor Mechanic school, Mr. Winkle goes home on a furlough. Amy hardly knows him, and his dog, Penelope, barks at him furiously. A short time after returning to camp both Mr. Winkle and Mr. Tinker are en route for a post of embarkation.

CHAPTER X

Between Mr. Tinker and the irreducible fact that they were actually off to one of the various wars going on, Mr. Winkle didn't sleep much that first night. He lay there precariously on the edge of the berth trying to adjust himself to the situation and regretting a little that he had not taken the chance of getting out of the Army when he had the opportunity.

This was, as the saying went, it. This was what he had trained for. He was going to where battles were being fought. He was going to help fight them. The realization struck him so forcibly that he nearly fell out of the berth, especially when Mr. Tinker gave him an extra hard push.

Then, again, he endeavored to look on the bright side of it. He was a hardened soldier, wasn't he?

Well, maybe not hard, but with plenty of preparation.

The additional months as a member of a service company had brought the confidence of experience.

They had brought a Corporal's stripes, and finally those of a full-fledged Sergeant. He and Mr. Tink-



er were a team, it having been found that Mr. Tinker was good at the heavier work, while he supplied a little more skill at figuring it out.

He couldn't overlook the drama of it, either. Here they were, several hundred men in a special train, rushing to an unknown destination to save the nation. He knew that crack streamliners were sidetracked for them. Everything made way for them. Even if you were hurrying to risk your life, that gave you a sense of importance.

He fell asleep on this thought, dreaming that he was staking his wide waters and that he grasped at a tiny island to save himself.

Mr. Winkle expected to be marched right on a ship as soon as they reached their embarkation port two days later. But there seemed to be no such hurry as that which had brought them here.

They were given physical examinations, their equipment was inspected, and orders were issued to keep their canteens filled to the mouth.

Thus readied, they were assembled one morning and marched out through an entrance in the brick wall. They made their way along a road at the side of the harbor, in which many snipe, all painted in indistinct gray, were moored. Mr. Winkle had never seen a real ship before, and was impressed with their size. He wondered which would be theirs.

They were called to a halt beside the high wall of one of the larger vessels.

Orders were shouted. To his amazement and relief, they started marching back again to the staging area. This had been merely practice.

The man next to him said, "That was a close one."

Each day after that they went through the same process. The third time it was repeated there were complaints.

Even Mr. Winkle asked these questions and came not to believe in any of the marches to the ship. He took it for granted that each time he arrayed himself in his full equip-

ment and sweated to the pier that he would turn right around again and come back.

The day they didn't stop, but kept right on marching up the gangplank and on to the ship, he felt betrayed, cheated and fooled.

To Mr. Tinker at his side he observed, "Well, I guess we've burned our gangplanks behind us."

Mr. Tinker stared at him, scowling to get his meaning. Though he didn't know the true quotation, he appeared to find something wrong with Mr. Winkle's version, or at least with the way he spoke.

"What's the matter, Pop?" he asked. "You seasick already?"

More men poured on to the ship, and still more marched along the pier toward her. Mr. Winkle, Mr. Tinker and ten others were shown below to their private stateroom. Instead of bunks, a large cabin had been stripped of its beds and other luxurious furnishings and canvas hammocks slung in tiers of three from a wooden framework.

Mr. Winkle drew one of the top hammocks, so close to the ceiling that it made him feel like a fly sticking there. They stowed their gear and investigated the quarters. One of the men opened a door and stood, frozen in his tracks.

"Come here," he said in an awed voice, "and see if you see what I'm looking at."

They crowded around him, peering over his shoulders, and saw a gleaming bathroom.

"Holy cow!" another man cried. "Ain't our suite sweet?"

The ship would be totally blacked out at night, which meant no smoking on deck.

No cigarette butt or scrap of paper was to be thrown overboard lest it leave a trail which could be followed.

In case the ship was hit and had to be abandoned, they were to slide down hanging nets which would be lowered, and not jump overboard.

If a man fell overboard, the ship could not risk stopping to pick him up.

These instructions caused no evident alarm. Normally, Mr. Winkle should have had an acute attack of imagination right then and there. But it didn't come, as it hadn't lately in the learning that a great and selfless mother, the Army, looked after his every interest. All he had to do was to trust it, obey orders, and, most important of all, keep his mouth shut.

The ship sailed that night while some of them were asleep and some of them were still adjusting their bodies to the hammocks. Mr. Winkle, listening, heard the deep throb of the engines. He put his hand against the ceiling and felt a thrumming there. The smell of oil became stronger. A low, sleepy murmuring came from other men. A forward movement became perceptible.

That was all. No one spoke.

In the morning they were at sea. Their own and dozens of other ships scratched a glassy mirror with continual, untired zigzags. The convoy stretched into the distance as far as the eye could see. At its outer edges they could make out destroyers and other warcraft, which kept up a worried pacing back and forth, in and out, and sometimes around in wide sweeps and circles.

It was heartening to see them and their fellow troopships. Though they knew that death was possible any instant from the sky or from beneath the water, it seemed just as impossible that anything could touch them.

Soldiers were everywhere on the ship, the last inch of space being crowded with them. If they had little privacy before, they had none now. It was barely possible to step anywhere without walking on somebody, or putting your foot into the middle of a crap game.

Somehow they managed to move around, for the most part good-naturedly. Mr. Winkle marveled at what he and other men had been conditioned to stand. He began to have a respect for the extent that man would let himself be abused for the opportunity of traveling a long way to get killed. Despite its inconvenience and tragedy, there was a decided element of joy in war, of virtue men becoming braves and setting out on the exciting adventures of the warpath.

The favorite pastime, while standing or sitting on deck, or leaning against the rail, was speculating on where they were going.

"Australia," was proposed, "and I aim to see one of them kangaroos jumping around with her kid in her pocket."

"No, sir," another differed. "If it was Australia, they'd told us. My cousin went out there last year and he knew from the time he left. He was fifteen years kangarooed yet, but he says the people there are happy as who cooks with gas."

"The Solomon," a third man said. "We took them over, didn't we? They're being sent out to hold them. I had it straight from the top kick."

"Something tells me," another man interrupted, "we're going to be dropped off in Hawaii. I always wanted to go there, and now it is."

He was hooted down on the basis that no such luck could be theirs.

It was Sergeant Winkle's considered opinion that they were going to New Guinea.

"What they get there, Pop?" he was asked. "What's your book say?"

"Cannibals," he told them. He thought his guidebook had said that. "Me," said Mr. Tinker, "I don't care where it is just so there's Japs."

On the fourth day, while sitting on the deck with his back against the rail, Mr. Winkle nearly jumped out of his life belt when there was a loud explosion forward.

He was lurching to his feet and had reached a crouching position before he realized that the gun crews were holding firing practice.

He sank back down again, seeing other men following suit.

The guns kept on chattering, sending up shells to burst high in the air at different levels. From the other ships they could see the same practice going on. It was fascinating to watch, and the noise and smell of burning gunpowder added to their sense of security.

In the midst of the racket Mr. Winkle was startled to hear his name being called.

"El, Pop!"

Looking up, he saw Freddie Tindall. In back of him were Jack and several more of the original Springville contingent.

"Hello, Mr. Winkle," Jack greeted him. The boy's eyes twinkled, and he spoke as if they were meeting casually on Maple Avenue.

"This," said Mr. Winkle, struggling to his feet, "is quite a place to have a reunion."

They held it, nevertheless, in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, pumping one another's hands and yelling above the noise of the guns. Freddie cried, "We've got more than this! Hey, Alphabet! Alphabet!"

In a moment the wizened little Sergeant pushed his way down the deck. The first thing he saw was Mr. Winkle's stripes with the "T" below them. Without raising his voice, but still making himself heard by lectured:

"I been in the Army eighteen years. You been in eight months, and you rate with me. We ain't going to win no war that way. And look what I got in my machine-gun crew. Him," he pointed at Jack, "and him," he indicated Freddie. "All they can do is outshoot any of them guys working them pump-guns"



The convoy stretched into the distance far as you could see.

up there. Where do you think we're headed for, Pop?"

Mr. Winkle's reply was lost in the blast of the anti-aircraft guns.

"Australia!" Jack yelled.

"New Zealand!" Freddie shouted.

"I told you it was India," the Alphabet said. "I had it straight from an officer at the One-A lowdown."

Mr. Winkle saw that Sergeant Cieslakowski had become one of them, and what was more, they had become one with him.

He was warned by this, and that the others were on the ship with him. It seemed to make it still safer, and the sea smoother and even more peaceful.

Yet still it wasn't quite the thing about war he sensed and for which he continued to search.

There was a stir among the ships of the convoy.

Messages were exchanged by blinker and flag.

Mr. Winkle's ship and five supply vessels began to take erratic courses.

It seemed as if something was going to happen after all, that a submarine had been detected. The men, lining the rails, watched and held their breaths.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

By HAROLD L. LUNDQUIST, D. D. Of The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. Released by Western Newspaper Union.

Lesson for October 29

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THE CHRISTIAN MOTIVE FOR LIVING

International Temperance Sunday LESSON TEXT—Psalm 4:5-8; Luke 4:4; John 6:35; Romans 12:1, 2; 13:12-14. GOLDEN TEXT—Seek those things which are above.—Colossians 3:1.

Disciplined living should be the goal of each of us. Life is not to be lived carelessly, influenced by chance events or passing impulses. Such discipline of life would keep men from the temptations which lead them into intemperance and sin.

A life can be properly disciplined, only as it is controlled by Christian motives. Such a life has— I. Spiritual Gladness (Ps. 4:5-8). The psalmist had faced the distressing questioning of men who derided him for his faith. They were unbelievers who demanded of him what good his religion did (v. 6). He has an answer, and it is the testimony of his own experience.

Those around him sought gladness in the harvest of grain and in the wine which was supposed to give a lift to their spirits. This was their joy. Well, the man of God had something infinitely superior. He had gladness in his heart. It was not dependent on outward circumstances—it was within.

Then note, too, that it did not rest on something that happened, or on some fellow man. "Thou (God) hast put gladness in my heart." That means real joy and satisfaction.

II. Spiritual Feed (Luke 4:4; John 6:35). It is delightful to have true gladness, but man needs food if he is to grow and to work. That is true spiritually, for he must have the needed nourishment of life here also.

Jesus when tempted (Luke 4:4) because He was hungry saw beyond the temporal need, and declared that life should be controlled by a higher principle. The spiritual has a place of supremacy over the physical in the life of the Christian man or woman. The body with its desires is to be subject to the definite control of the spirit, which takes its orders from God.

The explanation of the awful alcoholic debauchery of our day is found right here. Men have given their bodies the supreme authority and they are driven by the lusts of their flesh. What they need more than legal reform or restriction of sale of liquor (and we believe in both) is the regeneration of their souls by the grace of God in Christ Jesus. Let us bring them the gospel.

John 6:35 makes known the fact that Jesus, the bread of life, satisfies every need of men. Every normal hunger and thirst finds full satisfaction in Him. Have you tried Him as the One to meet the need of your hungry heart?

III. Spiritual Service (Rom. 12:1, 2). "Reasonable service," says the Authorized Version: "spiritual service," says the Revised Version. Both are right. The man who is really reasonable will be spiritual and will render to God a sacrificial service.

Note that it is a "living sacrifice" that is said to be "holy, acceptable to God." This is not a case of a single act of deep devotion (great as that may be), but a going on in the daily walk to live for Christ. That calls for grace and power, and He is ready and willing to give both to each of His children.

That experience with God means a non-conformity to the world, which is too little spoken of and less practiced in the church today. The one who professes to follow Christ is simply not to be conformed to the ways of this wicked world. There is to be a completely transforming experience of the grace of God, that takes you out of this world while you are still in it.

IV. Spiritual Walk (Rom. 13:12-14). Christians are the children of the morning. They walk in the light (I John 1:7). This world walks in darkness. No one needs any argument to prove that point—just look about you.

The deeds of darkness are evil deeds, and men dwell in darkness because they love evil (John 3:19). That means that the children of light must walk circumspectly and "becomingly" (that's a good word!) in this world. Thus we may attract others out of the darkness into the light, so that they too may put aside "reveling and drunkenness," yes, and also "strife and jealousy." Those go together.

The way to victory is to be clothed with the Lord Jesus and His righteousness (v. 14). That is a real "armor of light" with which we may be protected.

Note also that we are studiously to avoid making any provision for the desires of the flesh. Put such things away, and with them will go the temptation to use them. Some professing Christians need to heed this word by destroying some beverages which they may have on hand—just to give one example.



Lint From a Blis Serge Suit

New Yorkers and others planning to visit Miami Beach this winter "will be sleeping in churches and schools," according to the president of the Greater Miami Hotel Ass'n.

The Fibber McGee film, "Heavenly Days," briefly outlaid along with "Wilson" by some U. S. Senators (for showing to troops overseas), will be released any day. . . . The new stamp commemorating the defense of Corregidor was associated by Logan U. Reavis of Craycroft Press. . . . The Look publishers have been raiding all other mags for their new picture project—to compete directly with Life.

Gerald L. K. Smith, testifying before a congressional committee, said choosing between Dewey and Roosevelt is like choosing between a thug and a robber. If Smith isn't careful, Herr Goebbels will sue him for plagiarism. . . . Editor and Publisher's survey revealed that only 29 per cent of the papers are for FDR and that 10 states haven't a single Roosevelt gazette.

When a Nazi war prisoner died on an American ship returning here it was decided to bury him at sea an hour after the black-out—when the garbage was dumped too.

Several of the accounts in the papers about the "Under Cover" author being ejected from Gerald L. K. Smith's press conference by the frightened Smith, exposed by the author, appeared to overlook the big point in the story. Instead of belittling author John Roy Carlson for being kicked out, why didn't they emphasize his heroism in going unescorted right into the enemy's booby trap?

Love Letter: "Dear W. W." writes correspondent Ray Josephs, who covered South America and put it in a new cliche called "Argentine Diary." "Buenos Aires has a new newspaper—an underground paper, in which its big feature is a col'm titled: 'El Wachel de la Argentina.' The name was suggested when they learned you uncovered many a raw deal in the U. S. A.

"Practically all the dailies there have been gagged and strait-jacketed by the gov't, so that underground papers have sprung up everywhere. 'Winchel' gives out with the inside stuff in back of every move made by the Fascist chiefs at the Casa Rosada (Argentina's pink White House). He prints documents suppressed by officialdom, tells the facts deleted by censors and exposes the oo-la-la secrets of Juan Peron, Mussolini imitator, and No. 1 man in Argentina. The big-shots are going loco trying to learn where this new 'Winchel' gets his stuff. Caught reading him means the concentration camp at Patagonia. This is your monument in Argentina."

Our best unreliable source from Berlin just alarmed the following flash. It seems that Adolf and Goering had a tiff, again.

Adolf spotted a new medal on Hermann's uniform and said: "How many times, Hermann, I told you dot you must not vary more metles dan me? Vy you varing von extra mettle, haht?"

"Oh, mein Fuehrer," whined Goering, "diss is not a new mettle - diss iss my America First button!"

Add tough breaks: Dean Hudson, band leader, lost out on a sponsored auto program. Because his name was the same as another car . . . Dinah Shore is the victim of a wild rumor which has made her miserable, despite the acclaim of overseas troops she entertains. She is happy with her marriage. . . . Former AP correspondent Mark Barron who was stricken in Ethiopia and couldn't recover over there—is fully mended since he was inducted. He is now a commando!

There will be no fanfare about it, but the British military is about to hold its first court-martial in the U. S. . . . A British officer is the defendant. The case will be heard in New York and, for security reasons, in camera. . . . But the verdict, when approved by the British War Office, will be made public in London.

Varga gets \$1,000 each for his covers from King Features. . . . The next Sec'y of State for Cuba will be William Bell, whose family is from Beltsville, Md., near Washington. He recently fought a duel in Havana. His opponent was a newspaper publisher. Bell missed. The publisher refused to fire.

Judging from the way some gaudies pass over the tripod of the Axis, the only way for Russia to get treated well in the peace over here is to declare war on us.

Oh-you-Kid Day? There was some comment on Cong. Clare Luce, with one of the lads humping her for at least getting a little chic into congress.

"Sure," conceded an acidy gal, "Clare wears the most stylish shoes a candidate's feet ever rembled in."

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Farsighted Boss Didn't Wish to Set Precedent

The old millowner had very strong objections to granting concessions to his workpeople.

One day one of the oldest hands approached him. "If you please, sir, I would like to have next Friday off," he said.

"You want next Friday off, eh? What in the world for?"

"Well, you see, it's like this. It's my silver wedding, and me and the missus is going to have a bit of celebrating to do, and we thought—"

"Oh, you did," broke in the employer. "And tell me one thing: is this going to happen every 25 years?"

Coral Sea Divers Easily Overcome Grip of Octopus

Natives of the Coral sea have very little fear of strangulation in the grips of the monstrous octopus. Usually the octopus wraps its tentacles about the victim's legs, waist or neck and breaking this hold is simple. The native simply grasps the octopus' upper and lower jaws and, with a sudden powerful thrust, turns the mouth inside out. This bursts the ink reservoir, killing the octopus and causing the tentacles to uncoil.

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