

Sugar And Spice

by Bill Smiley



Battle Over War Books

My wife has been picking on me lately because I read so many war books. She claims that every time she goes into the bathroom, there's a new, vicious-looking, bayonet-wielding marine or soldier lunging at her from the cover of a pocket book on the back of the toilet.

I've been kind of sheepish about it, but I do enjoy a good war novel, so I've taken to slipping them under the bath-tub when not in use. But the kids, who like nothing better than to see me get a rocket from their mother, are starting to squeal on me. Kim came downstairs yesterday, bearing a new battle book with a particularly grisly cover, and with a look of delighted anticipation, succinctly titled: "Another war book, Mum."

"Why in the world," my wife wants to know, "do men find war so fascinating? You're always spoiling parties by getting off in a corner and talking about the silly war. Don't you realize it's been over 20 years, and you're no longer dashing, young heroes. I think it ridiculous." And so on.

As you can imagine, I have some pretty tart retorts on the tip of my tongue. But I wisely refrain from uttering them, announce that I have to go down and fix the furnace, and, in the safety of the cellar, give vent to the things I'm too gentlemanly to say to a lady, unless she's got both arms tied behind her.

Such as: "I like reading about war because it's just the opposite of marriage. War is made up of long periods of comparative peace, interspersed by short spells of violent fighting. Marriage is . . ." Or: "I'd rather be addicted to war novels than the sloop women read—sexy historical novels, murder mysteries, goony love stories and the pure unadulterated garbage of the movie magazine." Remember, I'm still down in the cellar.

Maybe it's true that men talk too much about the war, when they get together. But few men are able to cook, make their own clothes, or have babies, subjects that engross any gaggle of women. Nor are men much interested in talking about men, the only other subject on which women can go on interminably.

I think one reason men look back with a certain warped ten-

derness on war, and like to talk and read about it, is that it was the most peaceful period of their lives. It was a hiatus between the misery and turbulence of adolescence, and the grim, relentless struggle that constitutes their mature years, when they are trying to raise a family and make ends meet without going mad, mad I tell you, mad.

There's an old, and completely nonsensical tradition, that men who've come back from the wars don't want to talk about it. When someone asks them what it was like, they're supposed to go all thin-lipped and grim, and change the subject. I remember how disgusted I was with this business when I came home from overseas. Someone would ask: "How was it over there, anyway?" I'd settle back, prepared to tell him, for hours, when he'd add: "But I guess you don't want to talk about it," leaving me there with my mouth hanging open. I was dying to talk about it.

Men have been talking about war ever since God the caveman and his cronies sat around the fire and discussed with grunts of relish the late unpleasantness with the tribe across the swamp. And women have disapproved since Mrs. G. sat back in the corner of the cave wishing he'd stop inviting that riffraff around to drink horebrew and tell lies about what they did in the war.

Men have been writing and reading about war since they learned to write and read. From Homer to Hemingway writers have looked with horror and fascination on the ever-intriguing business of the human race wading in blood. Shakespeare accepted war as part of life. And if I recall, there was a good bit of smiting of Hittites, Philistines and others in the Bible.

So if I'm to have a book in the bathroom, far better it be a tale of blood and nobility, of grandeur and courage, with a grim-faced grenade-thrower on the cover, than a lurid volume that promises UNBRIDLED PASSION and features on its front a semi-draped female engaged in pulling a dripping knife out of her grandmother or somebody.

Weekly Features Syndicate

Cuz's Corner

By Bogley

Poetry And Paint

Folks often pass things along to me to use in this corner. It is obvious that I am going to have to begin labeling these choice bits so I can give them credit for their contributions. For instance, someone gave me this poem but I don't remember who. It is a dandy and I thought I would share it with you.

"Monkey's Viewpoint"
Three monkeys sat in a coconut tree,
Discussing things as they're said to be.

Said one to the others, "Now listen, you two,
There's a certain rumor that can't be true;
That man descended from our noble race;
The very idea is a disgrace.

"No monkey ever deserted his wife,
Starved her babies and ruined her life,
And you've never known a mother monk
To leave her babies with others to bunk.

Or pass them on from one to another,
Till they scarcely know who is their mother."

"And another thing you'll never see --
A monk build a fence 'round a coconut tree
And let the coconuts go to waste,
Forbidding all other monks a taste;

Why if I'd put a fence around the tree,
Starvation would force you to steal from me!

Here's another thing a monk won't do --
Go out at night and get on a stew,
Or use a gun a club or knife,
To take some other monkey's life.

Yes, man descended, the ornerly cuss,
But, brother he didn't descend from us!"

And the author of that is also unknown. All I can tell you is that I didn't write it and I don't know who passed it along to me.

went ahead and waited on this other customer.

I said this big mess was caused by the way I was raised. It wasn't either. Every bit of it was Hazel Donley's fault. She was the other customer. I could tell by looking at her that she was in a big fizzle to get back to her gas station so she could put more tigers in tanks, or dinosaur juice, or, maybe, mix up some more of that secret formula that they put in the gas to make cars run another mile or two down a railroad track - and one of these days a train'll be coming and the twain shall meet, then what a mess that'll be! Worse'n that paint.

Anyhow, because she was in such a lather to get back I undertook to shake my own paint, Miriam said, "Cuz, can you rig it up?" I told her, "Why heck yeah, anybody with one eye and half sense oughta be able to handle a simple project like this!" So, she told me to go ahead and she'd wait on Hazel.

How about her asking if I could rig up a simple thing like that? Why, if she hadn't been such a good friend of mine I woulda considered that question an insult to my intelligence.

All you had to do was set the bucket on a little round base, screw a clamp down on it, good and tight, and turn on the juice. I did that. It was easy as pie.

That was the shakiest contraption I ever saw in my life and made the durnedest racket I ever heard. And, lo and behold, after about six or seven shakes, that thing slung that bucket of paint about fifteen feet and down on the floor it went.

You'd be surprised how easy you can get the lid off a bucket of paint when you bounce it on the floor like this. Also, you'd be astonished at how fast paint will pour out of a bucket when it is rolling round on the floor with the lid off!

And let me tell you, that bucket of paint didn't miss Hazel's leg but 2 1/4 inches, if it had hit her she would have been in a heap worse shape than Blain Donley was that time one of his ole fox dogs (this is HIS story) ran over him and put him in the hospital.

Of course, I was extra glad it missed her on account of if it hadn't I'd bet you \$3.25 that she would have been just like some people are when they get a sorry, flea-bitten, mangy old hound run over. If you offer to pay em for the beast, suddenly he becomes the most valuable, best breed dog in seven states, worth a big pile of doogaloo. And I bet you a pretty she would have been the same way. She would probably have said, "This leg you busted up was as good, if not the very best leg I ever had,

Ivie Funeral Home

Murphy-Andrews-Hayesville

MRS. MAE ANDERSON BLAIRSVILLE, GA.—Mrs. Mae L. Anderson, 79, of Blairsville, Ga., Rt. 3, died Thursday, January 6 in her home after a long illness. She was a native of Clay

County, N. C., and a daughter of the late Thaddeus and Mary Cowart Ledford. She was the widow of Abraham Anderson. She had lived in Georgia since 1922.

Surviving are two daughters Mrs. Vina King of Blairsville, and Mrs. Gracie Toherow of Detroit, Mich.; four sons, Carl, Hobart and William J. all of Blairsville, and Garnie N. Anderson of Marietta; a sister, Mrs. Sallie Welborn of Clayton; 15 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

Cane Creek News

Mr. Glenn W. Mann former resident of Cherokee County passed away Jan. 3 at Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta, Ga., after a short illness. He is survived by his mother, Mrs. Ethel Mann, five sons, Rex and Jerry of Atlanta, J. D. of the U. S. Service, Clay and L. C. of the home, five daughters, Mrs. Frances Radford of Murphy, Mrs. Kenneth Patterson of Atlanta, Ga.,

Betty Sue, Linda and Carolyn of the home; three sisters, Mrs. Willard McClure, Mrs. Lloyd Clonts of Murphy, Rt. 4; and Mrs. Paul Mathes of Centerville, Ga.; five brothers, Mayford and Harley of Murphy; Jewell of Belmont, N. C.; David of Oak Ridge, Tenn.; and Marvin of Nepomoc, Calif. Funeral was Jan 5 in the Chapel of Dillon J. Austin Funeral Home in Atlanta, Ga. Dr. L. E. Smith officiated. Interment was in College Park Cemetery.

Services were held at 2 p.m. Saturday in Bethbarbara Baptist Church. The Rev. Early King officiated and burial was in the church cemetery. Pallbearers were, Dannie Key, Jerry, Howard, Randall and Clyde Anderson and Charles Wooten. Ivie Funeral Home of Murphy, was in charge.

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