



## The Sounds of Geese

By Vereen Bell

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN PIKE

**With the Lord's help Joe Bullock bares the villainy of Crabtree Myers, meting out punishment therefore**

THE wild geese flew over high, the November sun momentarily glinting on the white of their chins and tails. Joe Bullock looked up from his painting and watched them briefly. "Them's late gitting here," he thought. Three skiffs passed the Pelican II, the gill nets piled on their stern decks. Without breaking the steady rhythm of their rowing, the men nodded as they moved by, partly to Joe, but mostly to Nellie Barnaby.

The fishermen turned in at Jules Bar-

naby's fish-house dock with their catch, and Joe said, "Nellie, I been thinking."

Nellie Barnaby sat on the rail of her father's party-fishing cruiser boat and watched a niggergoose feeding under an overhang of bay brush.

"Nellie," Joe said, "ain't no sense in you marrying me."

"Ain't it?" she said. "How come?"

"You don't want to marry no old hard-luck somebody like me."

"Thought you said you wasn't hard luck no more, after gitting me promised to you," Nellie said. "You ain't backing out, are you, Joe?"

"No. Ain't nothing like that. It just looks like everybody's making money but me. Party fishing's plumb done, you might say, until spring er so."

"You could go gill netting."

"Ain't got no gill net."

"Pa'd let you have the loan of one."

Joe leaned to tie his boot, saw the broken mast. He stared at it, puzzled

Joe shook his head. "Ain't fishing with no borrowed net. Hard luck the way I am, a shark'd git in it, er a sawfish, and then I wouldn't just only be broke, I'd be into debt. Then I couldn't never build you no little bumbalow."

"The way the fish are running now," Nellie insisted, "you could pay for a net in one night."

"I'm scared if I went gill netting, it'd put a stop to the whole dadgone run, and then wouldn't nobody catch no fish. Be dog, if that ain't the truth. I ain't got the heart to mess up everybody's moneymaking."

"Ah, foot, Joe," Nellie said in disappointment.

JOE'S brush smoothly spread the paint over the scars the Pelican II had received in the September storm, when the water had been knee-deep in Crabflake Myers' store. Joe didn't look up, avoiding the hurt in Nellie's dark eyes, until Walt Minton called him. Walt Minton was the preacher and the best red fisherman in town. He stood below them on the pier, with his little outboard resting on a croker-sack pad on his shoulder.

"Let me have a skiff, Joe," he said.

"Them reds is going to be hongry out in the mouth of the river. I aim to harelip a few." Noticing the downcast manner of them, he said, "What ails you-all? Ain't had no disagreement, I hope."

"Everybody's making money but us," Nellie said. She nodded toward her father's fish house, where the latest catch was being weighed.

The preacher had been worried during this period of prosperity, for the jooks were getting too much business. He said, "Too much money is like a rattlesnake."

"Is that the truth?" Joe asked.

"The Lord's own sweet truth."

"We don't want too much," Nellie said. "Just some."

"Ain't you working for Jules, Joe?"

"Yes, but he cain't afford to pay me nothing much, except when they's fishing parties er goose hunters to take out. Trout and reds, they've come into the river now and don't nobody need a guide to find them. As for goose hunting, ain't many folks got the guts for that."

"Guess old John Ulm was one of the few shore-enough goose hunters, rest his soul," the preacher said, tightening the outboard's clamps on the transom of

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# OUR FIGHTING MEN



CLARENCE BLOCK

WHEN General Douglas MacArthur took charge in Australia things really began to hum—as they did in the Philippines, where natives used to tell U. S. soldiers how thankful they were MacArthur was there. “They thought the world of him,” states Pvt. Edward Carpenter of Melrose, Mass., who joined the Army two years ago to be in on the ground floor and was transferred out of the Philippines after ten months for reasons of health. Soldiers had it fairly soft before MacArthur came along. They were good soldiers and they used to drill hard in the mornings to keep in shape, but because it was so hot they were off duty from 1 P. M. to 1 A. M., except on days when they had special duties. MacArthur got them to drilling in the afternoons, sent them on long hikes in the cool of the evening, and instituted a “parachute guard” stationed on the roofs of hotels and other high buildings. A lot of cushy customs went out the window. No longer on tap were Filipino boys to make bunks, shine shoes, do laundry and take over K.P. duty—all for \$1.50 a month; and tailor-made uniforms at three dollars became extinct. It’s no wonder, Pvt. Carpenter says, the American soldiers on Bataan gave the Japs such a going-over.

SINCE long before the war, the Filipino Scouts who fought with MacArthur have been calling United States soldiers Joe or Joe American. The nickname is now beginning to stick, and the soldiers in this country who call each other Joe are really paying tribute to the scrappy little Scouts of Bataan.

**NORTHWEST DEFENSE SECTOR.** The Army’s bookkeeping system is such that the boys sitting out in the woods and on hilltops manning search-

lights, antiaircraft guns and barrage balloons have to account for every shot fired. Expended, the quartermasters call it. So far, none of the reports from this sector list any ammunition expended on Japs, but the guys at lonely defense posts can’t be blamed for taking advantage of the hunting opportunities. Their so-called covering up on the ammunition-fired reports, though, isn’t fooling anybody. Standing gag at Antiaircraft Defense headquarters concerns the flock of pheasants that “attacked our installation” and were knocked for a loop with three shells. Another report told of killing a deer which—yes, that’s right—was attacking an installation; but, for some reason probably not flattering to the prowess of the Army, the report concluded with the cryptic note that “some Marines got the deer.” A bear was killed because it was using, as a claw-sharpening instrument, a post on which a searchlight cable was strung, and the claws were lacerating the wire—it says here. However, since cats aren’t good eating, officers are more inclined to believe the report of an engagement with a cat on a barrage balloon wire which had to be shot down because the boys couldn’t coax it down. It might have clawed the balloon, they said.

Actually, animals frequently sabotage the Army, and it’s not always so funny. The antiaircrafters have hundreds of miles of wire laid along the ground in the Pacific Northwest, and besides being bothered by people who “find” the wire and use it for clotheslines or to tie up rosebushes, soldiers find that cows sometimes chew up the wires along with the adjacent grass. Porcupines seem genuinely fond of the wire insulation.

Air officers are elated by the friendly spirit prevailing between near-by resi-

dents and the soldiers on gun, searchlight and balloon emplacements in their back- and barnyards. The lads “on location” have virtually been adopted by their neighbors, but some field groups are stationed in odd places. One balloon outfit, commanded by an old-line cavalry officer, is quartered in a Girl Scout headquarters; and the C.O. has been riding horses long enough to get “government spread,” with the result that he finds it a little tough trying to fit himself into Girl Scout desk chairs. One searchlight crew is in a Grange hall, and every other Saturday night the boys from Brooklyn and Washington, D. C., move their cots out and spend an evening dancing the polka with the Swedish gals in the neighborhood. Prize for ingenuity goes to a crew stationed by an airplane factory. The commanding officer, a former engineer with draftsmanship experience, spotted and appropriated some of the giant wooden boxes in which plane engines arrived, laid out a floor plan and set the boys to work building packing-box barracks. A fellow down the street contributed some window frames, and a woman neighbor tossed in eight window curtains.

**FORT GREELY, Kodiak, Alaska.** Since last December 15th the boys at this outpost have been issuing an eight-column newspaper which puts to shame some of the mimeographed jobs run by outfits in more comfortable surroundings in the States. A complete file of the Kodiak Bear has just reached our desk, together with a letter from Corp. Gene Newhall, the editor. “There’s quite a story,” writes he, “in the mechanics of publishing a printed paper at all on this bear-infested island (two of the world’s largest extant carnivorous animals have been shot within sight of

**BACTERIA BURNER.** Newest method of purifying water for Army use is provided by a mobile machine called Sterozone by its designer, Calif.-Tech. Engineer Donald K. Allison (shown on truck above). Water passed through a filter, then treated with ozone generated by a high-frequency electric discharge, is delivered at the rate of 9,000 gallons an hour, free of all bacteria, taste and odor. Thirty units have been ordered by the government. In the field, one machine will furnish sufficient water for a division

camp). Our first two printed issues were hand set and rammed through a gummy little press in the ancient Russian-settled town of Kodiak. Two soldier-printers worked 26 hours at a stretch to get the thing in type, and two Aleut printer’s devils did the press work. A linotype machine had been ordered, but the war left it sitting on the dock at Seattle.

“Public Relations Officer Lt. Roy D. Craft, San Francisco Examiner man who put out the Fort Ord (Calif.) Panorama before coming up here, finally worked out a scheme for printing by remote control. We prepare and dummy all copy here, mail it to Anchorage on the mainland where it’s printed and loaded aboard the first available transportation back to Kodiak. Naturally there are hitches in such a system, and we don’t hit the street with the speed of a metropolitan extra, but we haven’t  
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