

A CHRISTMAS POEM

This is a Christmas of memories and promises
Memories of snow and lighted trees and laughter around a fire
And promises of snow and trees and laughter to come.
To come home to.

This is a Christmas of regrets and longings
Regrets for things we left behind
As intangible as the whisper of wind around the corner of the
house

Or the smell of pine and sweet cider.
Regrets as sharp as a last kiss
Or a good-bye at the station.
Longings for the girls,
Faces eager under the soft frame of hair,
Lips half-parted,
Clear eyes looking into yours.

This is a Christmas of war and novelty.
The lights on your tree are a display of shells
Bursting in a patterned pyramid over Leyte.
The presents strewn beneath the tree are moments.
Moments of rest and a bath and rationed beer.

There is no stocking hanging by the chimney
That stands alone with the house about it shattered
On the edge of France.
Just the chimney to remind you how you went out late Christmas
Eve. . . .
You'd said before you thought Christmas stockings were corny

But that evening you noticed a look in the kid's eye
And you said "Hell!"
And put on your coat and went looking for an open store.
Bought gadgets, candy, a tin horn.
And back at home stuffed them into the stocking, .
Hung it silently on the chimney
That might be that skeleton chimney in France.
This is a Christmas all in the heart.
The day-room tent has an imitation of a tree
And the chaplain and the Special Service officer
Drummed up a carol-singing group last night
And it was fine that they did, but it wasn't Christmas.
It was only an arrow pointing to the Christmas inside you,
The Christmas that you could keep only with yourself,
A waiting, hoping Christmas.

This is a Christmas of memories and promises.
Memories of snow and the wreath in the window
And Santa Claus on the corner,
His face a little dirty,
Ringing his bell,
And relatives coming to dinner.
Memories around you with the strange palms of the Pacific.
Dug into the side of a hill in Italy with memories.
These memories
And promises of Christmases to come.

—Sgt. AL HINE

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Hash-Marked 'Pop' Now Runs PX

Camp Forrest, Tenn.—When you hear any one at Camp Forrest saying, "Let's go over to 'Pop's,'" they're referring to PX No. 1 where a retired soldier named John C. Brennan of Tullahoma, Tenn., is in charge.

He wears civvies now, but if he had on his old Army blouse you'd see 10 hash marks for his 30 years of service, various decorations denoting service in the Spanish-American war, the Filipino Insurrection, the Mexican Border Expedition, and the first World War, a Sharpshooter's badge and the Purple Heart.

Retired in 1918, "Pop" continued to be associated with the Army, first at Fort Oglethorpe, Ga., and then here at Camp Forrest. He was born at an Army post, the son of a sergeant, and has worked at Army posts 7½ of the years he has been on the retired list.

Born 70 years ago at Fort Union, N. Mex., where his dad was a top kick in the 8th Cavalry, John Brennan joined the Army when he was 18 and became a member of the 12th Infantry Regiment. His top kick was his father, who had transferred to the Infantry.

In the next 30 years Brennan, who began service as a trumpeter, served at 10 forts in the United States, Alaska, Cuba, the Philippines and Mexico. His promotions were from private through corporal, sergeant, and color sergeant, to staff sergeant, the rank he held when retired.

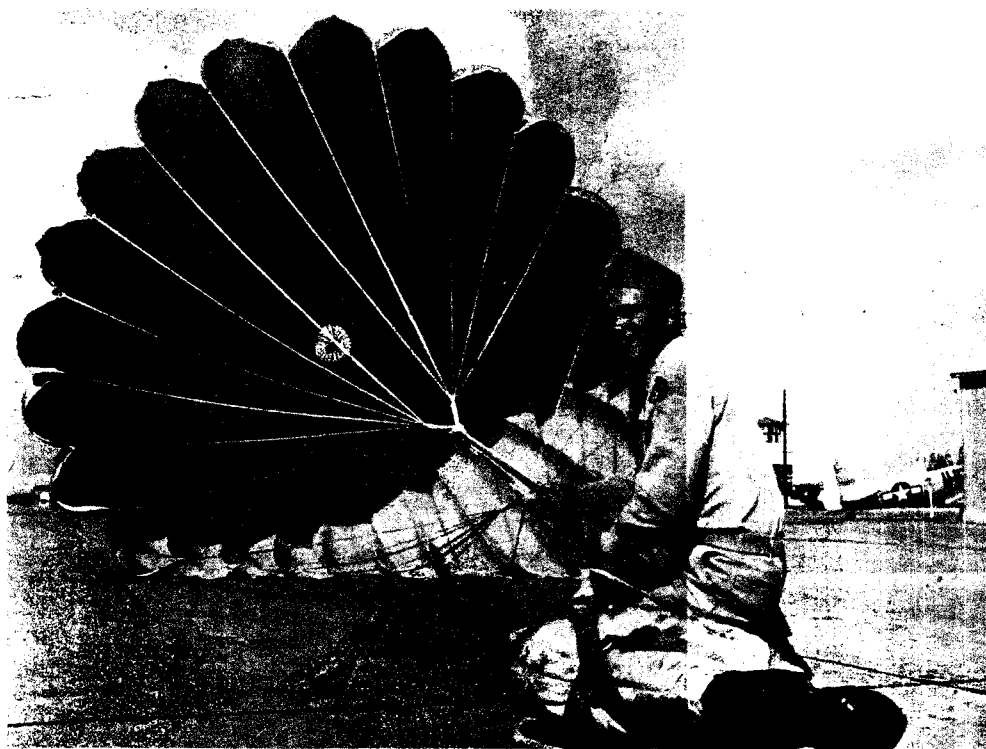
It was at San Juan Hill while serving with the 6th Infantry that he received the wounds entitling him to the Purple Heart. After the Spanish-American War he returned to Fort Oglethorpe, Ga., and he was serving there when retired. He remained on as a civilian employee until 1922 when he moved to Tullahoma, Tenn.

When Camp Forrest opened as a training center in this war, he went to work for the Army again. He has been a civilian employee at PX No. 1 for the past 3½ years.

"Pop" can quote pages out of the Soldier's Handbook, knows Army regulations, drill procedures, and the Articles of War. But armies and wars have changed since John C. Brennan became a soldier back in 1892.



CAMP NEWS



AAF GI Invents Chute Release

Harlingen AAF, Tex.—Pvt. Eugene C. Smith, a gunnery student here, has invented a delayed-action timing device to provide for the automatic release of cargo from a parachute immediately upon impact with the ground.

Smith worked on his invention for more than a year before submitting blueprints to the ASTC Headquarters at Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio. He received a reply that "such a device is urgently needed by the services," and a request to submit a working model for extensive examination and further tests at the laboratories there.

With the help of a machinist here, Smith made up a model. Lt. John A.

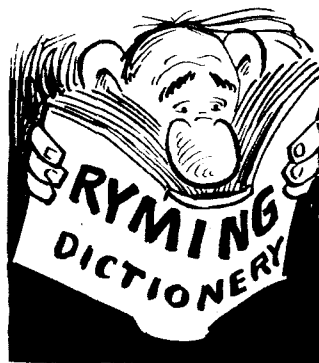
Hildebrand, piloting an AT-11, tested it by dropping it with a 24-foot yellow parachute from 800 feet while flying at 153 mph. Exactly 38 seconds later the 150-pound dummy cargo attached to the chute hit the ground and the chute fell to one side completely detached.

The importance of the device is that equipment, food and other material will remain exactly where they hit the ground and will not be damaged by being dragged by the chute when strong winds are blowing. It is also possible to use the invention in a modified form as a safety device to free crewmen from parachutes on impact when the men are forced to jump into water.

—S/Sgt. JIMMY PITT

WIN A WAR BOND!

\$10 to \$500



All you have to do is write a GI parody to a popular tune. Just set your own words, written on a subject of Army life, to any well-known tune. Tie KP to "Dinah" or guard duty to "Mairzie Doats." Simply follow the rules listed below and you may win anywhere from 10 to 500 dollars in War Bonds.

These Are the Rules

1. Parodies must be mailed by Mar. 1, 1945.
2. Entries must be original parodies, suitable for reprinting, written by enlisted men or women of the U.S. Army, Navy, Coast Guard or Marine Corps. Do not send music; send only parody and name of song parodied.
3. Parodies must be based on complete choruses of well-known tunes only.
4. Individuals may send as many entries as they like. In case of duplicate parodies, only the first arrival will be accepted.
5. Parodies must have a service or war subject. All parodies will become the property of the U.S. Army. Entries will not be returned.
6. Judges will be enlisted personnel of YANK, The Army Weekly, and of Music Section, Special Service Division. Judges' decisions will be final.
7. Address all entries to Parody Contest Editor, YANK, The Army Weekly, 205 East 42d Street, New York 17, N. Y., U.S.A.
8. Winners will be announced in a May 1945 issue of YANK.
9. Include U. S. address to which you wish prize sent. BONDS WILL BE MADE OUT ONLY TO ADDRESSES WITHIN THE U. S. IF YOU'RE OVERSEAS BE SURE YOU INCLUDE HOME ADDRESS AND NAME OF PERSON IN CARE OF WHOM YOU WANT YOUR BOND SENT.
10. Violation of any of the above rules will eliminate entry.

Prizes will be awarded as follows: Prize-winning parody—one \$500 War Bond; five next best parodies—one \$100 War Bond each; next 10—one \$50 War Bond each; next 25—one \$25 War Bond each; next 50—one \$10 War Bond each.