

THE DOPE

Sept. 1, 1943

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for its sons in the Service. No. 22.

The fruit crop isn't so good this year. In fact it's worse than that - it's just plain punk. Joe Prentice tells us that pears are running about 15% of a crop; peaches about 45%; and apples about 60%.But nobody's complaining about prices - nobody with fruit, that is. Apples two to three bucks a bushel; pears from four to four-and-a-half; and peaches four to five. "Never seen anything like it" says Joe -- and speaking as the guy on the buying end, we hope he never sees it again.

— V —

We've read a lot about post-war plans lately, but the best we've seen to date comes from one of our own boys, T/Sgt. Bud Standish. Known in Army circles as "the Standish Plan" - here it is, just as Bud drafted it: "When this thing is over I intend to sit on the porch and drink beer for several months - then rest awhile, catching up on corned beef and cabbage - and then start in on the beer again". (Incidentally, after God-knows-how-many bombing trips over the Mediterranean, Sicily and Italy, Bud has been sent back to a rest camp, where the plan is undergoing extensive tests).

— V —

Father Nugent has gone to Kansas City - flown out twice in the last ten days - on a most unhappy mission. Father Liguori, his brother, is very ill out there, and Father Charles has gone out to be with him. We sincerely hope that Father Liguori's recovery will be quick and complete, and that both Father Nugents can soon return to Douglas.

— V —

Did you see the cartoon showing two American soldiers passing a native belle in New Guinea? The girl is wearing only a grass skirt, revealing a setup of unusual charm. One soldier says to the other: "Gee, would'nt she look swell in a sweater!" (Our only reason for mentioning this is that the guy doing the talking looks like Benny Fisch).

— V —

From Ted Engel down in Camp Wheeler, Georgia: "Crawling in sand & mud most of the time now. Got my Marksman's medal last week".

And from Jack Powers, in North Africa, (via parcels post):
A cane for his old Uncle, Ky Walz.

More furloughs: Vic Culver has been here again, this time from Peterson Air Field, Colorado. Vic looked swell and had himself a grand time. As you know, he's an Army Meat Inspector now, and we ran across him in Van's one day, showing Harold how to handle a beef. And Harold was listening, too. (Wish you'd show us how to "handle" a ration book, Vic - we're hungry all the time). And as we go to press, Harold Beery is finishing a ten-day furlough, from Camp Barkeley, Texas. Harold had just completed a 6-weeks course in the Rigger and Wrecker School, at the Atlanta Ordnance Base, and is returning to his old outfit at Barkeley. He too looked like a million and seemed mighty glad to be in Douglas.

— V —

From Billy Goshorn, August 4th: "Have had a change in address lately....am now somewhere in jolly old England. Can't say anything about the trip or where we are, but I'm feeling swell and am happy. Especially happy as a matter of fact - we get paid this week....Have'nt had a chance to visit the country yet but will have a pass soon (I hope).....Just received the Dope, the July 15th issue, and have read it three times already - it's my first mail since leaving New Mexico.....Sure would like to be back in Douglas this summer. Maybe next year we can all be back. Say hello to everyone for me".

Righto, Billy. And by the way, when you go up to London, keep an eye peeled for Jake Jennings. Jake rides the subways a lot, also is a familiar figure in East End pubs.
P.S. In the pubs, be sure to look under the tables.

— V —

How wrong an editor can be! We'd just finished the above libel on the character of Jake Jennings (than whom we have no greater respect for anyone on our roster) when along comes a swell letter from him telling us about how hard he's working on Uncle Sam's mobile stuff. "I spend my days in grease and oil" he writes, "this keeps me pacified...And I might mention that we make a jeep do everything but climb a tree now - and we're working on that".

— V —

From young Don Kingsley, who's just made the grade as a Pilot out in Santa Ana, California: "Jerry Bekken was here last Sunday. But the Sergeant in charge of mess hall would'nt let me off KP so we did'nt have much of a visit. When I get out of this outfit I'm going to make someone a good wife - with all the cooking, dish-washing, sweeping, mopping and bed-making I can do..... Guess you know about my new classification. Sure went through hell to get it. I was scared to death. The kid who sleeps above me washed out and the kid in the top bunk on my right washed out and the kid in the lower bunk on my left washed out. I don't know how in hell they missed me - right in the middle".

From Capt. Frank Haven "somewhere in North Africa", August 15: "Have'nt been in one place very long lately.....When we moved to our present bivouac one of our Sgts. bought a baby donkey from an Arab. He was certainly a cute little cuss. We tried to call him Clarabelle but the only name that would stick was Jack. Jack ate everything. He was especially fond of pancakes, oatmeal, bread and Spam. He followed anyone who petted him and we all did that. The first morning he saw us all lining up for chow he did likewise. He passed through the line without getting a handout, so he went through again. The third time he got fed. The first night he was with us we tied him out behind the officers' tents. One officer came in late, not knowing about him. Along about midnight Jack let out his peculiar baby bray. The officer jumped up and yelled "What the hell was that?" "That's Jack", I explained, and told him about him. "Good Christ" he said, "I thought someone was dying".

— V —

This issue of The Dope has been mailed to all Douglas men in the Services through the generosity of Mrs. Mabel Zeitsch.

— V —

The most inspiring interview we've had to date we had a few days ago with Buzz Franciscus. As you know, Buzz has been invalided home with the Purple Heart, for wounds received in action. He volunteered in St. Louis two years ago and went to the southwest Pacific with the Marine Air Corps in 1942. He was in the first air outfit to land on Guadalcanal, spent three months in the thickest of the fighting there, collided with some shrapnel at two thousand feet up, and spent the ensuing months in a field hospital in New Zealand and the base hospital at San Diego. We asked him to tell us something about his experiences but he smiled and said he'd rather try to answer our questions. So we asked the sort of things that a civilian would ask, of which we report a few: What did you do on Guada? "I was rear-gunner on a dive bomber". What were your targets? "Japanese ships, mostly". How did you go about bombing a ship? "Well, we went in at about ten thousand feet, dove to about fifteen hundred and let go our bombs". What about the flak; didn't it bother you? "Yes, it was usually heavy; we seldom got home without holes in our plane". Were'nt you ever scared? "Yes, I was scared the first two times; after that you get used to it". How often did you go up? "Every day and sometimes twice a day". How were living conditions on the island? "Pretty bad. We slept only between raids and the food was poor". What about the Japs; were they any good? "They were good, alright". As good as the Americans? Buzz smiled at that one; "Well, no" he said, "not that good". Finally we asked him if he didn't have some message for all you boys he used to know. He thought a long moment, then said quietly: "Well, just tell 'em it was a hell of a fight. It's still a hell of a fight. But the worst is over: We know now we can lick 'em".

H. S. K.