

UNITED STATES ARMY RECRUITING SERVICE
Nov. 24 1941- - - - -KOIN 10:45 P.M.

Sec. 2
NO. 12

17

SOLDIERS OF THE AIR

ANNCR: KOIN presents ----- Soldiers of the Air!

MUSIC: THEME "SECOND CONNECTICUT REGIMENT" (475) UP AND FADE TO
BACKGROUND

ANNCR: It's the week after Armistice Day at the Army Recruiting Station, and Sergeant Bill Harris is for once sort of taking it easy (in anticipation of tomorrow's holiday.) Right at the moment Sergeant Harris is checking off the coming holidays on a wall calendar on which there is shown a reproduction of the famous painting, the Spirit of Seventy-Six by Willard. However, it's a long time until tomorrow so let's look in and see what's going on -----

SOUND: TELEPHONE BELL

BILL: Army Recruiting Service. Sergeant Harris speaking.

SADIE: (VIA TELEPHONE AND WITH SOME ASPERITY) Army Recruiting Service?

BILL: Yes, madam.

SADIE: Have you seen anything of the Spirit of Seventy-Six?

BILL: The Spirit of Seventy-Six! Why -- I thought that was a painting.

SADIE: (WEARILY) It is! He is! They are! At least Gramp's an old --- old chromo! If they aren't there now, they will be! and please, when they come, (MORE KINDLY) let them down gently, Sergeant. They mean all right, -- but Gramp's too old, and Third is too old, -- and Fourth is too short!

BILL: But really I don't ---

SADIE: Oh, you will! You'll know them. Just send them home, will you?

BILL: Why, of course, but ---

SADIE: Thanks!

SOUND: CLICK OF PHONE RECEIVER

BILL: Well! That's a new one!

FOSTER: What's a new one?

BILL: Some woman just phoned that I was to be on the lookout for the Spirit of Seventy-Six!

FOSTER: Why -- that's a famous painting like the one that's shown in that calendar there on the wall -- You know --- the one with the old men and the young boy drumming and the middle aged guy with the fife ---

BILL: Sure, I know. I look at it every day. Every school kid knows that painting but -- well, this woman said I'd know him when he gets here. Said he was an old chromo and that I was to let them down gently. Now what in the world -- as if we didn't have enough to do, what with inducting those forty-seven aviation cadets this week ----

SOUND: DRUMS OFF MIKE IN DISTANCE

FOSTER: Listen! Do you hear what I hear?

BILL: I don't hear anything.

FOSTER: Well, unless I'm mistaken --- it's the Spirit of Seventy-Six! Or at least the drum section. Listen!

BILL: Drum section -- sure enough! It is drums, but ----

SOUND: DRUMS UP A LITTLE LOUDER

FOSTER: And it's the Spirit of Seventy-Six in person! Look out there in the hall!

BILL: For Heaven's sake! (EXCITEDLY) Do you see what I see?

FOSTER: Sure I do! Looks like the calendar picture stepped down off the wall -- life size!

BILL: That old man! He must be the one the woman said to let down easy -- and the middle aged man -- with a wife -- that must be -- and -- look at that kid!

FOSTER: For all the world like that painting. Gosh! It's uncanny! Look, they're posing!

BILL: What do you suppose the gag is?

FOSTER: I wouldn't know. Some kind of a stunt, I reckon -- but ---

BILL: Here they come. Get ready for grandpappy!

GRAMP: (OFF MIKE IN VOICE WHEEZY WITH AGE) Company ---! (PAUSE) Fall out! (SOMEWHAT LOWER AS HE APPROACHES MIKE) Come on now, you fellows and let me do the talking. (FADING IN) There's got to be some place in this man's army for the likes of the Jackson Q. Jeffersons. We'll talk to the Sergeant.

BILL: How do you do?

GRAMP: (CHIDINGLY) Sir! Don't you know how to address a captain?

BILL: (BRIGHTLY) Yes, sir! Captain!

GRAMP: Well now, that's better. Sounds a little more like a salute in your voice.

BILL: Yes, sir!

GRAMP: Captain Jackson Q. Jefferson of the Connecticut light horse artillery, reporting for duty!

BILL: Reporting for duty! Why -- why -- (WITH COURTESY) Yes, sir!

GRAMP: Heh! Heh! That's better, sergeant!

BILL: You wish to speak with the Colonel, Captain Jefferson?

GRAMP: Heck, no! I want to enlist! (REPEATS SLOWLY) I want to enlist! This is my grandson, Lieutenant Jackson Q. Jefferson, 3rd Step up here, Third --

THIRD: Lieutenant Jackson Q. Jefferson, third, reporting for duty,
sergeant!

BILL: But -- but -- Yes, sir, Lieutenant!

GRAMP: And this is my great grandson, Jackson Q. Jefferson, fourth ---
Now where in tarnation is that boy?

FOURTH: Here I am, gramp! You're so tall I get lost behind you!

GRAMP: Step lively, Fourth ---

FOURTH: Yes, sir! (PAUSE) Jackson Q. Jefferson, Fourth, reporting
for duty, sergeant!

BILL: (A LITTLE OFF MIKE) Come a little closer, young man. You're
so small I can hardly see you around that filing case.

FOURTH: Is this better? I'll stand in front of Gramp -- I mean
Captain Jefferson, sir. (SADLY) But that makes him look
so tall ---

THIRD: (CHUCKLING) And you so short, eh?

BILL: How tall are you, son?

FOURTH: (PROUDLY) Five feet, -- and don't call me son! I'm eighteen!

BILL: I beg your pardon, Jefferson. No offense meant. You see, --
you're really pretty small and you do look young and in that
get up ---

GRAMP: (INDIGNANTLY) Get up! Sergeant, (ORACULARLY) these habil-
iments we're wearing represent the dignity and patriotism
of the Jackson Q. Jeffersons!

THIRD: (AS A SIDESHOW BARKER) These are the costumes, sergeant, that
have made the Jackson Q. Jeffersons the most famous troupe
in vaudeville. --- These are the costumes that have made the
Spirit of Seventy-Six the most talked of painting in America!
These are the characters that ---

FOURTH: (INTERRUPTING HIM) Aw, cut out the plugs, pop. The sergeant isn't a booking agent!

GRAMP: Fourth! Remember your manners. Step up now and let's enlist in the United States regular army.

BILL: Here's an enlistment blank. Now, if you'll just answer a few routine questions ---

FOURTH: Yes, sir!

GRAMP: Shoot!

THIRD: Go ahead!

BILL: Age?

FOURTH: Eighteen.

GRAMP: Ninety-five, and spry too!

THIRD: Fifty-one!

BILL: Hey -- wait a minute! One at a time, -- please! Somebody's over the age limit! Eighteen to thirty-five, you know.

FOURTH: Not me!

THIRD: I guess that lets me out.

GRAMP: You mean I can't enlist?

BILL: (KINDLY) Well, you see, Captain Jefferson, -- I don't make the regulations. I just follow them.

GRAMP: (THOUGHTFULLY) Can't enlist, eh? We-e-ll --

FOURTH: But I can, gramp! I can!

BILL: Sorry, son, but ---

FOURTH: Don't call me son! I told you I was eighteen.

BILL: I forgot, -- sorry. I was thinking about your height.

FOURTH: My height! What's wrong with it?

BILL: (LAUGHINGLY) There's nothing wrong with what height you have, but the maximum for enlistment in the regular army is six feet six ---

GRAMP: (INTERRUPTING) That's me, by cracky!

BILL: And the minimum is five feet. You aren't five feet tall are you, Jackson Q. Jefferson, fourth?

FOURTH: Sure, I'm five feet tall!

BILL: Su-u-ure?

FOURTH: (HESITANTLY) Well -- not quite sure. I measured last month and I was -- I was Gosh, Sergeant, to tell you the truth I was a quarter of an inch short!

BILL: Well, now that's a shame. Maybe a little later ---

GRAMP: Are you trying to tell us, young man -- me and Fourth and Third -- trying to tell us Jackson Q. Jeffersons that you don't need us?

BILL: No, -- it isn't that the army doesn't need you, but maybe it needs other men more. Maybe there is something you can do for the army outside of wearing a uniform ---

GRAMP:- (SLYLY) What do you mean, sergeant?

BILL: I don't mean anything special -- I just meant that there's a job for all of us in national defense, but that some men can serve their country best in uniforms and some best in civvies ----

GRAMP: (THOUGHTFULLY) Hm-m-m. I see. Clothes got something to do with it?

BILL: Oh, no. I didn't mean ---

FOURTH: Costumes, maybe?

BILL: Why no, but ---

THIRD: I got it! I got it!

BILL: Got what?

THIRD: (EAGERLY IN WHISPER) You mean the Spirit of Seventy-Six, son?

FOURTH: Sure! Come on, gramp! We got to get going!

BILL: Going? Where?

FOURTH: (PATRONIZINGLY) Look, sergeant. You just go over there and look at that calendar on the wall, and see if ---

BILL: You mean the one with the picture, The Spirit of Seventy-Six on it?

FOURTH: That's right! Go on --- go on ---

BILL: Okay, but I don't get it. (FADING) And while I'm looking at the picture ---

GRAMP: (STAGE WHISPER) What're we going to do, Fourth?

FOURTH: Do? Do what we've always done? Play the fife and drums!

THIRD: Sure! If it's clothes that serves the country, uniforms and civvies, why not costumes?

FOURTH: That's it! We'll go into our routine! The old Spirit of Seventy-Six. Only this time it won't be a tableau! It'll be the real thing! We'll march right down Broadway!

THIRD: And when we've got a crowd following us -- a crowd of young fellows, we'll march right down here to the Post Office and then ---

GRAMP: By cracky! We enlist 'em!

FOURTH: (ENTHUSIASTICALLY) That's right. Come on, pop, blow that old flute clean! This is once it's going to ---

THIRD: (BLOWING AND PUFFING AS IF CLEARING THE FLUTE OF MOISTURE) It won't work!

GRAMP: Won't work! You mean you can't play it!

THIRD: (BLOWING AGAIN REPEATEDLY) Nope, Won't work.

FOURTH: Oh well, it's only a prop anyhow! Pretend you're playing it!
(FADING) Come on, Gramp -- I mean, Captain Jefferson.

SOUND: ROLLING OF SNARE DRUMS SUITABLE FOR MARCHING. FADE IN AND HOLD TO ESTABLISH SOUND, THEN FADE A LITTLE SO VOICES MAY BE HEARD ABOVE DRUMS

GRAMP: (SHOUTING A LITTLE ABOVE THE DRUMS) Look around, Third! How many we got trailing us?

THIRD: (TRIUMPHANTLY) Plenty! Must be at least fifty! A lot of young fellows too.

FOURTH: It's only one more block to the recruiting station. We'd better march right up the steps!

SOUND: TELEPHONE BELL

BILL: Army Recruiting Service. Sergeant Harris speaking!

COP: (VIA TELEPHONE) Harris! This is Officer Sullivan. What's the meaning of this army parade?

BILL: What army parade?

COP: Wise guy, huh? You know well enough what I mean! What's the idea staging a parade without a permit? Stopping traffic! Cluttering up Broadway with a -- Hey you! Get off the street car track!

BILL: What's going on, officer?

COP: You ask me what's going on! A fine business when the army has to start breaking all the traffic laws ---

BILL: But ---

COP: Now you listen to me, sergeant -- you get these crazy triplets off the street and --- Hey you!

BILL: (CHUCKLING) Who, me?

COP: No! Yes! Aw -- what's the use?

SOUND: TELEPHONE RECEIVER SLAMMED

BILL: (LAUGHING) That cop Sullivan sure is mad. From what I gathered the Jackson Q. Jeffersons' must be jamming the traffic down on Broadway, but I don't see what that's got to do with the recruiting service ----

FOSTER: Maybe it's got more than you think. Listen! Do you hear what I hear?

SOUND: DRUMS IN A LITTLE STRONGER TO ESTABLISH, THEN TO BACKGROUND

BILL: Drums?

FOSTER: Yes, drums!

BILL: I'm afraid so.

FOSTER: It's the Spirit of Seventy-Six again! Wonder what's up this time?

BILL: Look out the window and see ---

FOSTER: Okay. (FADING) I'll see what's going on. (OFF MIKE) There's fifty men behind them ----

BILL: Behind who?

FOSTER: Behind the picture -- I mean behind the old chromo -- oh, for gosh sake's! Behind the three --- musketeers?

BILL: Behind the Jackson Q. Jeffersons?

FOSTER: Yes. Now they're posing ---

BILL: The men -- or the Jeffersons?

FOSTER: The Jeffersons --- They're rolling the drums to a finish --- They're ---

SOUND: DRUMS ROLL TO ABRUPT STOP

FOSTER: That little runt ---

BILL: You mean Third?

FOSTER: Yes. Third's carrying that recruiting poster on his back!

BILL: He can't do that! That poster's government property!

FOSTER: And they're coming up! Grab those enlistment blanks, (FADING IN) Sergeant Harris. Something tells me we're going to need them!

SOUND: CROWD VOICES FADING IN WITH FOURTH'S VOICE HEARD ABOVE THEM

FOURTH: (FADING IN LIKE A CIRCUS BARKER) Come on, you guys! If I can do it, you can. This way to the United States Army Recruiting Service! This way to enlistment! Right this way to an army career, young men -- right this way --

BILL: Well, young man!

FOURTH: We've come to enlist, sergeant.

BILL: (MEANINGLY) We?

VOICE #1: Sure, We! If this little guy is good enough for the army, so am I!

VOICE #2: How about me? I'm five feet ten?

VOICE #3: Or me? I'm six feet six!

SOUND: CROWD VOICES UP A LITTLE THEN CUT AS BILL SPEAKS

BILL: Wait a minute! One at a time, please!

FOURTH: Me first, sergeant!

BILL: (WHISPERING) But you're too ---

FOURTH: (PROUDLY) Oh no, I'm not! I'm exactly five feet tall, right this very minute! And you've got to take me!

BILL: (WHISPERING) Are you sure?

FOURTH: Of course, I'm sure! When we went out I measured!

BILL: (WHISPERING SOLEMNLY) Barefooted?

FOURTH: (SOLEMNLY) Barefooted!

BILL: (NORMAL VOICE) All right, -- you first! (PAUSE) Just a minute fellows. I'll pass out these enlistment blanks. You can fill them out in pencil and then I'll check them with you individually. Here you are ---

SOUND: RATTLE OF PAPERS BEING SHUFFLED

BILL: Well, Fourth, this is once you're first! Full name, please?

FOURTH: (DECLAIMING) The Spirit of Seventy -- Aw, shucks! Jackson Q. Jefferson, Fourth!

MUSIC: THEME UP AND OUT

ANNCR: And so we leave Sergeant Harris signing up another recruit for the regular United States Army at 323 Main Post Office Building. Next week at this same hour KOIN will present another in this series of Soldiers of the Air. Tonight's program was written by the Oregon Writers' Project of the Work Projects Administration and produced by members of the Youth Theatre Guild. The cast included:

Listen again next Monday night at ten forty-five over this station when you will again hear -----

SOUND: TELEPHONE BELL

BILL: Army Recruiting Service. Sergeant Harris speaking.

MUSIC: THEME UP AND OUT