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UNITED STATES ARMY RECRUITING SERVICE
Nov. 24, 1941-----KOIN 10:45 PM

SOLDIERS OF THE AIR

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

MUSIC: THEME "SECOND CONNECTICUT REGIMENT" (475) UP AND FADE TO BACK-
GROUND

ANNCR: It's Thanksgiving week --- but oddly enough Sergeant Bill Harris of the United States Army Recruiting Service doesn't see much to be thankful for. For one thing -- it's raining -- raining cats and dogs -- He's too old a soldier to complain -- even about the weather -- but ---- Well, there's just one thing that can bring the glad light of Thanksgiving to the sergeant's eyes -- a recruit! But -- what's that? No recruit at all this rainy day? Well, not yet -- but -- there goes the telephone bell and you know that means action to Sergeant Harris ---

SOUND: TELEPHONE BELL

BILL: Army Recruiting Service. Sergeant Harris speaking!

WICKER: (VIA TELEPHONE) Testing the line. Testing the line. What is your number please?

BILL: Atwater 6-1-7-1 --- The United States Army Recruiting Service!

WICKER: Tests Okay, mister ---

BILL: (LAUGHING) Not mister, but Sergeant Harris! (PAUSE) There's nothing wrong with our phone that I know of.

WICKER: Not a thing, Sergeant -- but ---

BILL: (ON THE SCENT OF A RECRUIT AS USUAL) But? But what?

WICKER: Funny thing -- here I'm cutting in a couple of new lines and I get in touch with the Army Recruiting Station!

BILL: What's funny about it?

WICKER: Funny! (LAUGHING) Look, Sergeant Harris -- I am sitting out here in the rain on top of a telephone pole, wishing I could enlist in the Signal Corps -- and binge -- or drip-drip! Or maybe ting-a-ling -- anyhow there's the army on the wire!

BILL: (LAUGHING) Say, where are you anyhow?

WICKER: If I'm not mistaken, I'm about a hundred feet from your window -- you are in the main post office building, aren't you?

BILL: Sure, Room 325.

WICKER: Well, here I am -- up in the air ---

BILL: (LAUGHING) I know! You got up that telephone pole but you can't get down ---

WICKER: Say, Sergeant -- if getting down from this pole was all I had to worry about ---

BILL: Got a worry, eh?

WICKER: Worry! Say I positively got a dilemma!

BILL: Sounds serious. Suppose you slide down the pole -- do a hand over hand along the wire to my window-- or ----

WICKER: Okay, soldier! Look out, pole. Here I come!

SOUND: TELEPHONE RECEIVER CLICKED INTO PLACE

BILL: Well, -- that's a new one! Picking recruits right out of the air. (PAUSE) Hey, Sergeant Medbury, take the phone, will you?

MEDBURY: (OFF MIKE) I guess I just as well be on the telephone. This typewriter's got me goofy. (FADING IN) It just won't do what my fingers tell it to.

BILL: I sent for a typewriter repair man. He'll be here any minute --- just keep him out of my way while I sign up this telephone guy, will you?

MEDBURY: Look! Here comes -- well --- look at the Spirit of Optimism.

With a repair kit -- must be the typewriter repair man. (FADING)
Here, give me those head phones.

UNDER: (FADING IN WITH GREAT AIR OF FACETIOUSNESS) Well, well, gentlemen and soldiers! Greetings and salutations from the Typewriter Service Co. Came to fix your typewriter. Name's Oliver Underwood! (LAUGHING SLYLY) Not bad, huh? Underwood typewriter! Got it? (LAUGHS AGAIN)

BILL: Sure, but ---

UNDER: Have a smoke, soldier! A corona--corona!

BILL: No, thanks. We don't ---

UNDER: Don't thank me! Thank my girl Elsie Smith from the Woodstock district: (LAUGHING) Good, huh? Very good! (BRIEF PAUSE, THEN IN COMPLETE CHANGE OF VOICE) Well, what's wrong with the mill?

BILL: Mill?

UNDER: Sure -- mill -- machine -- typewriter! (FACETIOUS AGAIN) What's the trouble? Does it type your wife's name on your girl's letter?

BILL: (DRYLY) Not precisely. When we type "dear sir" it comes out looking like "dear -- smudge".

UNDER: And you don't want smudges in the army?

BILL: (LAUGHING) No smudges. In our business even the machines have to be perfect ---

UNDER: What do you mean even the machines?

BILL: I mean we won't settle for anything less than the best. Now you take the army ---

UNDER: Naw, you take it! You already got it and you have to take it. Me, I don't! Independent --- that's me -- I mean to leave it alone.

BILL: Well, I guess that's that. (PAUSE) Let's get back to the typewriter. The trouble of it is, the keys pile up.

UNDER: Elementary, sergeant! Elementary! Leave it to Noiseless Underwood. That's me, -- Noiseless! Good, huh?

BILL: (DRYLY) Sounds to me as if it would be quite perfect -- You noiseless, I mean!

UNDER: (UNAWARE HE IS BEING SQUELCHED) Say, sergeant! That's good. Very good indeed. Well, one side, soldier, while I fix her up. If Noiseless Underwood can't make her run -- she must be a snail! Give me a sheet of paper, will you?

BILL: Here, take this enlistment blank.

UNDER: Thanks, buddy! (FADING)

SOUND: PLACING PAPER ON ROLL AND RUNNING IT INTO THE MACHINE

UNDER: Now to go into the silence ---

BILL: (JOKINGLY) Not a chance!

UNDER: (LAUGHING) Me -- not the machine! I'll just subside to a mutter! I sort of like to mutter while I work ---

SOUND: PECKING ON TYPEWRITER KEYS AS UNDER WORKS

BILL: Quite a mutter's boy, aren't you?

UNDER: Tch! Tch, sergeant, you sound subversive! (FADING TO SOUND OF TYPING) Mutter's boy! Say, I'm nobody's boy. Independent, that's me!

BILL: No dependents?

UNDER: (OFF THE MIKE AND TYPING) Huh-uh.

SOUND: RAPID TYPING, THEN ABRUPT STOP

UNDER: (STILL OFF MIKE) Sa-ay, Sergeant, is the stuff on this blank I'm typing on the questions the recruits answer when they enlist? (PAUSE) You know -- name -- address -- mamma -- papa ----

BILL: Yes, a recruit answers all those questions.

UNDER: (OFF MIKE) Well, I guess I can fill in questions for a test of this machine. You know we usually test a machine by writing (ORATORICALLY) Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their party -- Now is the time --

BILL: Now is the time for me to go to work. Here comes that telephone prospect. Go ahead and matter, Underwood, and I'll sign that repair order later. Right now I've got to talk to that fellow coming down the hall.

UNDER: You mean the one that's wearing a harness?

BILL: Yes, he's a telephone line man.

UNDER: Okay, I'll have this machine singing in a jiffy ---

SOUND: TYPING INTERMITTENTLY AS UNDERWOOD WORKS

BILL: (SLIGHTLY LOUDER) Right in here, mister -- you must be the fellow that was phoning me.

WICKER: (FADING IN) Sure, that's me. Wicker, -- Alvin Wicker. Up a pole and down again, that's my dish! But right now I'm up a stump -- and that's different.

BILL: Well, at the moment we're fresh out of stump pullers but we'll do what we can for you. What's the trouble?

WICKER: It's like I phoned you. I want to enlist but I can't do it.

BILL: Why not?

WICKER: I've got two dependents. At least they're dependent for the time being. If it wasn't for that, why I'd grab one of those enlistment blanks and ---

UNDER* (SLIGHTLY OFF MIKE AS HE TYPES) Name?

WICKER: Alvin Wicker -- but ---

UNDER: Wicker -- (TYPING) Hey -- someone's crazy. My name's Underwood!

WICKER: Gosh, I thought you was asking me my name.

BILL: No, that's just Noiseless Underwood, the typewriter repair man. He's muttering over an enlistment blank as he tries out that machine -----

SOUND: TYPEWRITER CLICKING

WICKER: Well, as I was saying if it wasn't for my sister in school and my mother I'd sign up this minute.

BILL: (SYMPATHETICALLY) Maybe you're doing just as much good for Uncle Sam right where you are. We've got to keep up our communication systems you know ---

WICKER: That's just it. I read about the Signal Corps and -- gosh -- I'd like to get in on that! Why, in one sacred division alone they've got over seven hundred radios and telephones and say, wouldn't I like to get in on that radio-telephone business!

BILL: The Signal Corps could certainly use a man like you but ---

WICKER: Well, as soon as I see a piece of property I've got, I'll be in uniform, I can promise you that. I'm going to be one of those guys out in front ---

BILL: What'd you mean -- out in front?

WICKER: I mean the soldiers out in front of the main force -- setting up communication -- reconnaissance --

UNDER: (SLIGHTLY OFF MIKE) Ever been arrested!

WICKER: (EMPHATICALLY) No! I've never been -- oh, excuse me! That guy's got me bothered.

BILL: What about this piece of property you mentioned?

UNDER: (OFF MIKE) What was your last job? Hey, that's a good one! My last job didn't last so I got this one and it's lasted so which is my last job? Good, huh?

BILL: Well, at least, Underwood, it's not so bad as some of the other jokes you've pulled in the last ten minutes. How's the repair job coming?

UNDER: Fine. (FADING IN) I think I got her purring now. Give me another blank. I got this one full of "Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their country. Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their country --- Say, that's funny!

WICKER: What's funny about it? I think it's a swell idea.

UNDER: It's funny because I meant to write party --- come to the aid of the party -- You know --- that old testing line. And I wrote country ---- Gosh! It looks like fate had a hand in this ---

WICKER: Well, I wish fate would take a hand and sell that hunk of land out on the Peninsula for me. If I could find the right buyer, I could get enough for Sis and Mom to live on the income and I'd enlist ---

BILL: Would you like to take a look at one of the blanks, just in case things work out for you. Here, take this one ---

WICKER: Thanks, I'd like to. Looks simple enough but ---

UNDER: Give me one too. (FADING) I'll make a final test of this machine.

SOUND: PAPER BEING ROLLED INTO TYPEWRITER, THEN ADJUSTED

BILL: Sorry I can't advise you on the real estate, Wicker, but --

UNDER: Name? (PECKS ON TYPEWRITER) Oliver -- Underwood ---

WICKER: Maybe if I mention the land everywhere I cut in a new phone someone will buy it.

UNDER: Age? (PECKING ON TYPEWRITER) Twenty-three. Nice age if you ask me!

BILL: That's the idea! Or advertise it.

UNDER: Any dependents? (INDIGNANTLY) That's three times I've answered that question --- No, none!

WICKER: (LAUGHING) Oh well, maybe a
buyer is sitting on top of the
next telephone pole. Who knows? UNDER: References? (CHUCKLES
AND TYPES) Sure! Sure!

BILL: (LAUGHING) Well, that's not so
far fetched. That's where I
found you!

WICKER: I sure wish I knew of a buyer -- UNDER: Education? Two years
in college? (FADING
IN EMPHATICALLY) I
guess I can take care
of that!

WICKER: (ASTONISHED) You can? You mean you know of a buyer ---

UNDER: Huh? What's that?

BILL: Wicker thought you meant you knew of a buyer for his property
out on the Peninsula.

UNDER: (FADING IN) Property out on Peninsula?

WICKER: Yes. I want to sell five acres --

UNDER: Elementary! Elementary!

WICKER: You mean you do know someone who wants to buy!

BILL: (ADMENISHING) This isn't a joking matter, Underwood. Wicker
wants to sell in order to establish a trust fund to care for his
sister and mother. Then he can enlist --

UNDER: I'm not joking. This morning I was ever doing some work for the
Universal Flange Corporation. I heard the president saying that
they were going to expand -- and wanted an industrial site on
Peninsula. Maybe they ---

WICKER: That's all I need to know! I'll be seeing you (FADING) Get that
enlistment blank ready and sharpen your pencil ---

UNDER: Gosh! Look at that guy sprint!

BILL: (HAPPILY) Yep. That's the way we like 'em to come into the army! Begging for training ---

UNDER: And panting to sign on the dotted line -- huh?

BILL: (LAUGHING) Sure! (PAUSE) Well, how's the typewriter? Get it fixed up?

UNDER: (PANTS AUDIBLY SEVERAL SHORT GUSTY BREATHS)

BILL: (CHUCKLING) Say, what is this -- I asked you if the machine is in order and you start puffing!

UNDER: (BETWEEN PANTS) Not puffing! Panting.

BILL: I don't get it. What are you panting for?

UNDER: (CONTINUOUS PANTING) Panting for a pencil! This machine fills in all the blanks but dog gone it won't sign my name!

BILL: (ASTONISHED) What's that?

UNDER: Here, give a look at this enlistment blank you gave me to test the type on. I got that machine purring ---

BILL: Give it to me. (PAUSE) Why, you -- you filled it out!

UNDER: Sure! That machine knew more than I did! It just naturally filled in those answers for me -- and now -- the machine's purring and I'm panting ---

BILL: (INCREDULOUSLY) Panting to enlist?

UNDER: Uh-huh!

BILL: Well, I'll be --- Hey, Sergeant Medbury! Give this guy a pencil! Quick!

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 KOIB will present another in this series of Soldiers of the Air.

(CONT'D)

ANNCR: Tonight's program was written by the Oregon Writers' Project of the Work Projects Administration and produced by members of the Portland Civic Theatre. 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