

SOLDIERS OF THE AIR

United States Army Recruiting Service

KOIN ----- July 6, 1942 -- 10:45 P M

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

MUSIC: THEME UP AND OUT

ANNCR: To Sergeant Bill Harris of the United States Army Recruiting Service the telephone bell at three twenty-three Main Post Office has come to mean just one thing,-- another request for information on the Aviation Cadet program. Certainly Sergeant Harris has never associated the telephone bell-- much less a cow-bell, with the ideals men fight for. His idea of the "Bells of freedom" had some remote but exalted relation to the sound of the Liberty Bell, clamoring the glorious news of Independence on that long ago Fourth of July in Philadelphia. Telephone bell, school bell, church bell, or cow bell bore no relation to freedom-- they were just pleasant noises to Sergeant Harris until the other day when Jock Denny made out his second application for enlistment as an Aviation Cadet. It seems Jock had tried to enlist last summer and failed,-- but that was before Dave Whitney gave him the little silver cow-bell as a good luck charm. Let's listen in and hear the story from Jock himself as he tells it to Sergeant Harris,-- but wait (FADING) There goes the telephone bell----

SOUND: TELEPHONE BELL AND RECEIVER RAISED FROM HOOK

Bell: Army Recruiting Service. Sergeant Harris speaking. (PAUSE) Aviation Cadet? Well, the general requirements are normal vision,-- that's twenty-twenty eye-sight, you know,-- and between the ages of eighteen and twenty-six inclusive--perfect health, and-- (PAUSE) No, there's

no hard and fast educational requirement now. If you can pass the aptitude test, there's a place for you. (PAUSE) Sure, glad to help you, come down to three twenty-three Main Post Office.

SOUND: RECEIVER REPLACED ON HOOK

JOCK: (PLEASANTLY) I'll betcha I can pass 'em this time.

BILL: Pass what this time?

JOCK: Aptitude tests, physical tests, vision tests! This time I really ring the bell,-- and here's the bell that proves it!

SOUND: TINKLING OF SMALL BELL

BILL: Why, it's a little cow-bell.

JOCK: (INDIGNANTLY) Cow bell! Now there's imagination for you. It's a liberty bell, that's what it is!

SOUND: TINKLING OF BELL

BILL: Well, it's sort of shrunk, if it's the liberty bell. I thought the Liberty Bell was--

JOCK: Sure, I know. You thought the Liberty Bell was a big hunk of brass with a crack in it back there in Philadelphia.

BILL: Well, yes, I --

JOCK: Yeh, so did I until I met Dave Whitney,-- or maybe it was until I met Dave Whitney's cow.

BILL: Whitney's cow! (PAUSE) What on earth has Dave Whitney's cow got to do with the liberty bell, or with your enlisting as an Aviation Cadet?

JOCK: Brindle, that's the cow,-- I got this bell off of Brindle.

BILL: Say, aren't you the fellow who was up here last year, trying to enlist and --

JOCK: I'm the guy. Remember, I tried to enlist as an Aviation Cadet then,

but gosh, I was underweight, I couldn't work the problems, I couldn't spell and I didn't know a thermometer from a thermostat and-- Well, you brushed me off in a hurry.

BILL: Then what makes you so certain you can pass the tests now? Maybe you'd better try for the Infantry, the Field Artillery, or the --

JOCK: (WITH DETERMINATION) I'll pass this time. That's what I'm trying to tell you. I know I'll pass! (PAUSE) Gosh, Sergeant Harris, I sure was low that day last summer when the Army turned me down. You see, I'd run away from school because I hated all that latin and history and stuff they made me study. I wanted to be a pilot, not a professor.

BILL: So you started with a tail spin?

JOCK: (RUEFULLY) Yeh. A tail spin that landed me out on a country road at dusk, tired and hungry,-- and so low I could have crawled under a snake.

BILL: (CHUCKLING) Of course you'd have to find the snake first--

JOCK: (LAUGHING) Well, I didn't look for a snake, because I found Brindle,-- that's Dave Whitney's cow. Gosh, I was hungry, and when I heard this little bell tinkling and thought of fresh milk, why, (FADING) I just naturally decided to try my hand at milking----

SOUND: EVENING SOUNDS WITH TINKLING OF COW BELL UP AND DOWN TO BG

JOCK: (FADING IN) So-o-o there, Bossie. (PAUSE) Hey, be a good girl and move your hindlegs out of the way, -- (PAUSE) How's a guy going to milk you if--Hey, hang onto your tail, will you?

SOUND: COW BELL UP THEN OUT

JOCK: So-o-o, Bossie, nice Bossie--

DAVE: (FADING IN) Did you say Bessie?

JOCK: (ASTONISHED AND STILL GRIEVED WITH COW) Bessie! No, I said Bossie!

DAVE: Well, her name's Brindle.

JOCK: (LAMELY) Oh, Brindle--

DAVE: (PLEASANTLY) It's a funny thing. Brindle's the best milker in my herd, and yet she's the stubbornest thing,-- just won't come home. That's why I put that little silver bell on her. Pretty sounding, ain't it?

JOCK: Yeh, but--

DAVE: Funny thing, -- every other cow on the place starts home every evening just the minute that Mainliner plane flies over, but Brindle --

JOCK: (DEFENSIVELY) Don't say plane to me!

DAVE: (PLEASANTLY) I was just trying to say that the pilot --

JOCK: Cut it out, will you?

DAVE: Sure, sure. (PAUSE) But I can't stop the Mainliner from flying over my pasture any more'n you can teach Brindle to come --- There it comes now! See, down there to the south --

SOUND: AIRPLANE MOTOR FADE IN STRONG AS IF PASSING THEM OUT IN DISTANCE

DAVE: Pretty sight, ain't it? Wish I was as young as I was in the last war. I'd be a pilot or a bombar-- Hey, what's eating on you youngster? You look like a --

JOCK: (BITTERLY) That's what you think! You'd be a pilot! Sure, that's what I thought, but I don't know enough--

DAVE: You look plenty smart to me.

JOCK: Oh, I'm smart enough, I guess. I'm O-kay physically, only a little underweight and --

DAVE: Good food will fix that up.

JOCK: And my English is--is lousy, and I've plumb forgotten all the algebra and geometry I know and---Aw, what am I telling you this for?

DAVE: (GENTLY) Maybe because I'm interested. Maybe because when I was a young soldier in the first world war I was as hungry as you are now,-- and maybe because I tried to milk a stray cow too, -- a Frenchman's cow, with a bell on it.

JOCK: (INTERESTED) And the Frenchman caught you just like you've caught me?

DAVE: (LAUGHING) He sure did. (PAUSE) He gave me a lecture about how people always put bells on precious things that mean a lot to them. You know, things they need, things they want to find when they're in trouble, like well, like--

JOCK: Like cow-bells?

DAVE: Yes, but mostly like church bells, and school bells and fire bells, and-- well, things that mean something special. But here, what're we standing here for? Go long, Brindle---

SOUND: COW BELL UP AS IF COW MOVING FORWARD AND FADING TO BG UNDER CONVERSATION

DAVE: Come along up to the house. We'll milk Brindle and-- Come along!

JOCK: Well, if you're sure--

DAVE: Of course I'm sure. (PAUSE) Watch out for this brush.

JOCK: (APOLOGETICALLY) I'm just a down and out kid. Maybe you shouldn't--

DAVE: (CHUCKLING) Well, I'm just an out and out V-F-W, so maybe we should --

JOCK: (SUSPICIOUSLY) A V-F-W! I ought to report you to --

DAVE: A Veteran of Foreign Wars. You know, -- a member of a nation-wide organization of men who have fought for the United States on foreign soil.

JOCK: Oh, I see. (PAUSE) But why should you help me?

DAVE: Well, kid, it's a long story. Hey, go long, there, Brindle!

SOUND: BELL UP AS IF COW HURRIED ON THEN FADE TO BG

DAVE: You see, there's thousands of us men, us V-F-W's, banded together for patriotic service. Most of us are too old to fight, or physically unable, so we asked the War Department what we could do to help win this war.

JOCK: (RUEFULLY) And the War Department said (MOCKINGLY) You lovely V-F-W's! Just take in all the kid tramps that the Aviation Cadet Board turns down and (BITTERLY) we'll win this war in nothing flat!

DAVE: (SUDDENLY UNDERSTANDING) Is that why you're so sore? Turned you down, -- huh? (QUESTIONINGLY) Today?

JOCK: Naw, -- yesterday. That's why I was trying to steal milk. I haven't had anything to eat since then.

DAVE: (THOUGHTFULLY) Underweight, eh? Well, we can soon fix that up, -- me and Brindle. Can't work your algebra problems, huh? Well, we can fix that up too and say --- (ENTHUSIASTICALLY) By golly, kid, then you can do my fighting for me!

JOCK: But I --

DAVE: (WITH GROWING PLEASURE AND EXCITEMENT) Don't argue! Come along! Hurry. Just as soon as we've finished milking and had our supper, we'll jump in the car and hustle into Lincoln High School and (FADING) the first thing you know, young man, you'll be sprouting wings!

SOUND: CAR STARTING, GEARS MESHING, MOTOR UP, THEN FADE TO BG

DAVE: (HAPPILY) Well, here we go, kid, -- Aviation Cadet or bust!

JOCK: I still don't get it.

DAVE: Simple as A-B-C! The War Department says, "Go to it, you Veterans of Foreign Wars! You want a job, -- well, you've got one. Prepare, -- recruit -- train Aviation Cadets!" So that's what we're doing, not only here in Oregon but all over the United States.

JOCK: But how do you do it?

DAVE: You'll see! But we've got to hurry to get there before the bell rings--

SOUND: MOTOR UP AND DOWN TO BG

JOCK: (LAUGHING) More bells, huh?

DAVE: Sure, only this time, it's school bells. (PAUSE) Bells of freedom,
I call 'em.

JOCK: Bells of freedom? Like the Liberty Bell?

DAVE: Sure! Only school bells and church bells and --

JOCK: (LAUGHING) And cow-bells?

DAVE: Yes, and cow-bells-- ain't maybe so celebrated as the Liberty Bell,
but believe me, kid, they mean the same thing. Churches are free,
and every church bell rings out liberty. Why, even cow-bells, they
mean peace and quiet and the right to free living and thinking. And
school bells-- but here we are, kid. It won't be long now!

SOUND: CAR MOTOR UP AND TO STOP, DOORS SLAMMED ETC.

DAVE: Come on.

JOCK: Is this Lincoln High School?

DAVE: It sure is. (FADING) Now, through the door and ---

SOUND: DOOR OPEN AND CLOSED

JOCK: (FADING IN) Gosh, there's a lot of fellows here. Are they all trying
to brush up on English and algebra and trig and --

DAVE: Every fellow you see is. And look! See those little humps on his
shoulders?

JOCK: Why no, I don't see--

DAVE: (CHUCKLING) Sure, little bumps,-- like wings sprouting!

JOCK: (AWED) You mean pilots' wings?

DAVE: Sure, pilots' wings, grown especially by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, with the help of the Portland Public Night Schools. You see, kid, this is what democracy means,-- all of us working together: the Portland Public Schools, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the War Department.

SOUND: CALL BELL SOUNDING

DAVE: There's the bell. Time for classes to begin, and time for us to hop over to Mrs. Griswold's office and sign you up and pay your fees--

JOCK: Mrs. Griswold? Fees? Gosh, I haven't got any money.

DAVE: Well, the Veterans of Foreign Wars have. Come along! And that's part of our job!

JOCK: You mean you'll--

DAVE: (BRUSQUELY) Forget it. You can work it out milking Brindle!

JOCK: (SERIOUSLY) Look, Dave. I don't know how to say it, but, well, if I make good and get to be an Aviation Cadet,-- well, could I have that little silver bell-- the one off of Brindle? (FADING) As a sort of-- Liberty Bell---

SOUND: TINKLING OF SMALL BELL UP AND OUT

BILL: Liberty bell, eh? (PAUSE THEN CHUCKLING) Well, Denny, it still looks like a cow-bell to me.

JOCK: I reckon it does. And if you saw Dave Whitney, you'd say he looked like a dairy rancher too, but to me,-- why, to me Dave and those V-F-W guys look like Santa Claus.

BILL: Sure, Santa Claus with jingle bells!

JOCK: (LAUGHINGLY) No, Santa Claus with Liberty Bells, and the Air Corps insignia on his coat lapels. Aw, come on, Sergeant Harris, give me that application blank!

MUSIC: THEME UP AND OUT

ANNCR: And so we leave Sergeant Harris of the United States Army Recruiting Service, signing up another Aviation Cadet for the Air Corps. (PAUSE) You too can sign up, young man, if you are between the ages of eighteen and twenty-six, have normal vision, and can pass the aptitude tests. If you're rusty on high school English, algebra or geometry, you can enroll in refresher courses offered through the cooperation of the Portland Public Night Schools, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the War Department. (PAUSE) Once accepted as an Aviation Cadet you will be sent to school for training, during which you will be paid seventy-five dollars per month. You will also be furnished with medical and dental care, be given food and lodging, and a ten thousand dollar insurance policy free during the training period. Moreover you'll be heading for a two hundred and forty-five dollar job in the army, and later, for a civilian career in aviation. For full details, phone the United States Army Recruiting Service, ATwater six one seven one.

MUSIC: THEME UP AND DOWN TO BG

ANNCR: Next week at this same hour KOIN will present another in the series of Soldiers of the Air. Tonight's program was written by Claire Warner Churchill of the Oregon Writers' Project of the Work Projects Administration, Harrison E. Devereaux, State Administrator, and produced by members of the Portland Civic Theatre. The cast included:

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