

# Army Schools Draw From All the World

Forty-seven Nationalities Represented at Camp Upton, First of the Recruit Educational Centres



ANGELO QUAGLIA, FORMERLY IN THE ITALIAN AIR SERVICE, AN ACE HAVING EIGHT ENEMY PLANES TO HIS CREDIT

By BELA W. NORTON.

UNCLE SAM has undertaken the role of schoolmaster. With the versatility so popularly and accurately ascribed to that elderly gentleman who never grows old, he has tackled his new problem with such characteristic energy that we may say he has achieved success. If it meets with your approval, let's address him in his new title, Uncle Sam, M. A., the degree signifying "Maker of Americans."

He is not precisely the president of a great new university, although the size of his undertaking might justify such honors, titles and emoluments as accompany that position. He is not "professor" in a new school of correspondence, although one may guess that his "paper work" is even more voluminous and intricate than that of any such provider of study and success. He is not the superintendent of a great city school system nor the headmaster of an exclusive and cultured private school. He has not reverted to the country schoolmaster who "boarded 'round" and maintained the dignity of his position in the little red schoolhouse by the proper administration of birch and willow and common sense. He is not precisely any one of these. From each one he seems to have accepted contributions as he turned to the task of education which confronted him.

That task he found in the new army which he is raising, and he is carrying the atmosphere of books, of school days, of school rooms, of education and of citizenship to the quiet cantonments which are now garrisoned by the recruits and Regulars of our military establishment.

### Illiteracy Revealed in Draft Records.

Call it education, reconstruction, home missionary service, uplift work, or what you will, the fact remains that it is one of the most timely plans of Americanization which has functioned successfully, while many others have crumbled and groined under the weight of words or never passed beyond the oratorical stage. The Recruit Educational Centre at Camp Upton one year ago was the experiment. It is now a permanent institution recognized in the budget and staff of the War Department. Similar schools have been established this summer in Camps Jackson, Pike, Travis, Grant and Lewis to meet the imperative need of elementary education for the masses of native Americans and immigrants between the ages of 18 and 35 who are entering the army.

Illiteracy was one of the sober revelations of the late war disclosed to army officers in the records of our selective service men. In the National Army. During the war they weren't concerned so much about the supply of man power as with the speed in converting that man power into fighting units. With the termination of hostilities and subsequent demobilization of the fighting forces there came the problem of recruiting the ranks with new regulars to maintain the permanent establishment.

Recruiting for voluntary enlistments revealed other things. Uncle Sam could not compete with the great industries as far as wages were concerned. He could not outbid his competitors for the man power which he wanted. What could he do and what did he do? The first Recruit Educational Centre at Camp Upton was a partial solution of the problem.

Draft records of men between the ages of 21 and 31 showed that 24.9 per cent were illiterate and therefore incapable of full military service. In general they were either uneducated native Americans coming from unprogressive rural, mining and



A BARRACKS CLASSROOM AT CAMP UPTON



THIRTY NATIONALITIES REPRESENTED IN THIS GROUP OF SOLDIER STUDENTS



ABEDUDULE R. TAMEREZO, A TURK, ONE MONTH IN UNITED STATES.

mountain sections, or illiterate immigrants who had been unable or disinclined to take advantage of opportunities to learn our language and customs and become citizens. Tens of thousands of both classes were swept into the army when the draft machinery commenced functioning. Some both apt and eager, grasped the new life readily, availed themselves of liberal naturalization privileges, and saw service overseas. The casualty lists and a famous Liberty Loan poster are grim reminders of their loyalty. Vastly greater numbers spent most of their army days in these heterogeneous organizations called "development battalions," which were left at camp when units embarked for the great adventure.

Rehabilitation, reclassification for less arduous forms of military service and educational programs were tasks of these salvaging organizations. The permanently incapacitated were discharged on surgeons' certificates of disability, conscientious objectors were given service compatible with their religious beliefs, battalion schools for instruction in English and rudimentary subjects were started, and special courses in physical and military training were given to the idea of fitting the rejected soldier for some place in the vast machine when the need came for men of his type. There were slackers who bluffed their way into development battalions, and there were able bodied men of foreign birth who wanted to be real soldiers but couldn't because they knew no English—and in some cases could not even write their names.

Out of the misty store of this latter form of man power, the mass of unskilled immigrant laborers, eager to learn the fundamentals of American citizenship, is being drawn a surprisingly large number of recruits for our standing army. The appeal seems greatest to them. Without education of some kind they can never rise. The army offers more than it ever offered before. They have responded and are responding.

News of the army plan of education has already spread to parts of Europe and many prospective immigrants are known to be planning to serve at least three years in the United States Army in order to learn English and perfect themselves in skilled trades.

Uncle Sam was alert enough to see that a part of his job in making soldiers of these recruits would have to be instruction in the fundamentals of the English language. He has not only given them English, but he has also poured out a stream of simple, concentrated and easily assimilated mental nutrition, which includes bits of history and civics, so he will be glad to give them naturalization papers when they have completed an enlistment of three years. Not more than six months of this time is spent in one of his Recruit Educational Centres.

### In the Melting Pot.

The Recruit Educational Centre at Camp Upton was established May 1, 1919. Until July 29, 1920, it was the only organization of its kind in the country. It is not simply a melting pot. It is a melting pot filled with fusible human material. The "heat," or energy if you prefer, is provided by the simple determination to produce good soldiers, and, most of all, good Americans.

Capt. Bernard Lentz of the general staff, credited with evolving the plan of instruction, has described the purpose of the school as follows: "The primary object of the Recruit Educational Centre is to give the men a thorough

course in elementary English, coupled with instruction in the fundamental duties of a soldier. The illiterate or non-English speaking recruit enters the service with an impediment, viz: lack of knowledge of sufficient English to enable him to carry on properly as a soldier. It is to the interest of the soldier and it certainly makes for efficiency in the army to have this impediment removed as soon as possible. This Recruit Educational Centre aims to do.

"Authority to enlist illiterate and non-English speaking recruits is extended to include the whole country whether enlisted for general or special assignment. All men in the aforesaid classes will be sent to a Recruit Educational Centre as soon as enlisted. Men for general assignment will be assigned upon completion of the course. The men given a special assignment will join their organizations as soon as they complete their school work at the recruit centre.

Twenty-five Per Cent. Illiterate.

"The War Department's arguments for opening enlistments to the illiterate and non-English speaking are briefly these: "The draft showed about 25 per cent illiterate or almost illiterate in the English language. By permitting these men to enlist the army opens a heretofore untouched field amounting to almost 25 per cent of the grown up population of the United States. By enlisting these men for three years the War Department can afford to combine a course in English with recruit instruction, covering four or even six months, for at the end of this period these men will serve two and one-half years in their permanent organizations and will, economically speaking, be from two to three times as valuable as men enlisting for one year.

"The army has special inducements to offer these men. They are assured a thorough course in English as soon as enlisted, for the Recruit Educational Centre schools never close; they go on the year round. There is the additional advantage for non-citizens, namely, full citizenship at the end of their three year enlistment. If the illiterates and the non-English speaking were

good enough to fight for the country, in all justice they are entitled to the peace time educational privileges that the army may offer. Last and most significant, no doubt, is the argument that this educational and Americanization work will help to convince the people that the army, in addition to being an insurance against war, is also a real peace time asset."

School Comprises Six Grades.

The school comprises six arbitrarily designated grades, which, in turn, are divided into four sections—A, B, C and D. Knowledge of the English language determines the grade. Intelligence rating as shown in the standard Beta test determines the section of the grade which the recruit enters. For purposes of instruction the sections are kept relatively of the same size. It is significant that a man cover the prescribed work four times as readily as C men and almost twice as fast as men of the B section. A man remains in the same section of each grade throughout the course. Ninety per cent of the A men learn the grade work in about two weeks and graduate at the semi-monthly promotions.

But how are Antonio, Otto, Pedro, Olat, Abraham, Nicholas, Casimir, George, Luke and the hundreds of other representatives of the forty-seven nationalities at Camp Upton initiated into such a polyglot organization for military and civic training? Possessed with little save the desire to earn while learning and physical qualifications to pass preliminary recruiting tests, recruits are sent to camp and put in a casual detachment for an isolation period of fifteen days. During this time they are clothed, taught to salute and are given tests by the school psychologist to determine their grade and section in the school. All men who cannot read enter the first grade, section D. About 90 per cent of the recruits at Camp Upton have started from this point.

After the period of isolation the recruit attends school. Military training and the school programme are closely coordinated so that every day except Saturday and Sunday—and during the summer Wednesday afternoons—the recruit spends two and a half

hours in each of the two activities. He is relieved from company details and fatigue during the first month. The work of each grade is designed to be covered in two weeks. Some men in the lower sections of the first grade cannot grasp the work, simple as it is. In that time and move upward very slowly. In cases of extremely low intellect where there is no prospect of improvement, a board of review may investigate and recommend either discharge or assignment to such branches of the service as can use such men in some capacity.

### Books Appeal to Students' Pride.

The text book for each grade is a volume of ten lessons comprising twenty-four pages illustrated with engravings, cartoons and caricatures. The first three grades lead up to writing letters home and developing for such letters suggestions which are full of interest to a man in the army and his new relations to family and friends. Books for the fifth and sixth grades are of biographical nature. Lessons in the former are designed to appeal to the pride of the non-English speaking man and at the same time point out to the English speaking man the fact that his comrades represent nationalities which cherish the memory of heroes relatively as great as the heroes of America.

The sixth grade emphasizes the lives of such Americans as Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, Franklin, Grant and Roosevelt. A supplementary reader containing humorous soldier stories adds a humanizing touch.

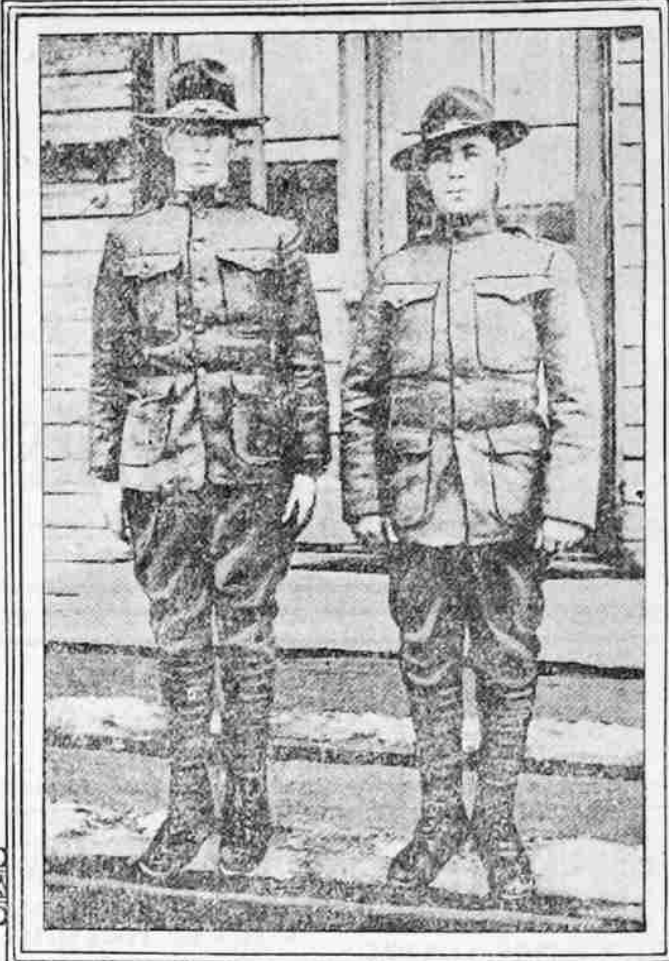
Elements of American history, rudimentary civics and geography are taught in the higher grades. Short recruiting speeches are sometimes required as a means of developing self-expression, arousing imagination and impressing the public with the value of the new life in the army. Group singing is taught by the camp song leader when the companies assemble at the camp theatre each week.

The "cadence system" of close order drill developed by Capt. Lentz carries the instruction in English and cultivation in coordination to such a prosaic thing as the first fifty pages of Infantry Drill Regulations, the groundwork of all military discipline and training. The recruits learn not only the execution of squad and platoon movements but also cadence and English words as they count "by the numbers" and repeat in unison the commands they are executing.

### On the Chautauqua Circuit.

The twenty-eight men of the "Americans All" detachment who toured the country last fall under the command of Major Samuel T. Stewart demonstrated the results of the early months of the Upton school. Five squads of similar graduates of the school this summer are attracting favorable attention in their appearances under the auspices of a Chautauqua circuit. They drill, sing popular army songs and tell of their experiences at the Recruit Educational Centre.

A typical Chautauqua squad, upon inquiry, was found to contain only one American. The other seven included an Italian, an Australian, a Greek, a Russian, a Pole and a Spaniard. Each had to be asked his nationality because none of the number seemed to have bothered about digging up the origin of the members of the squad. They could drill, however, and they had learned to sing and speak English well enough to appear before a Chautauqua crowd. The Chautauqua assignment incidentally is no small incentive to the man in the ranks who is struggling to master his drill, the manual of arms and fundamentals of the English language within a few months.



JOSEPH JOHNSON BORN IN ICELAND, and TONY RIZZO, BORN IN ARGENTINA

The school at Camp Upton at present includes about 1,500 recruits. A staff of thirty civilian instructors under the direction of Myers B. Horner works in cooperation with the commissioned personnel assigned for military instruction of the two battalions. Forty-seven nationalities are represented—Austria, Italy and Russia with more than a hundred each, and a half dozen other countries each with more than twenty. Arabia contributes two, Iceland has two, Malta one, Morocco four and Turkey adds eighteen. The illiterate citizens come from thirty-seven States. Georgia tops the list with 165, closely followed by North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee and South Carolina. There are eighteen New Yorkers to pair off with the Turks, seven from Massachusetts, two from California to console the Icelanders, who are just as far from home, and others have come from Arizona, Colorado, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Vermont and Wisconsin.

### Frenchman Holds Speed Record.

Charles Kilch, who came to this country from France, holds a record for speedy admission into the army. He enlisted two hours after arriving, knew no English and yet completed the course at Camp Upton in four months and qualified for a Chautauqua group. He had had some military training in his native land.

A recruit in this country five months had spent two of those in the army and was learning to read and explain such sentences as "I am looking for a job," "the soldier walked down the street," when the writer saw him in the school at Camp Upton. Another recruit of the same nationality, six years in this country, had been in school three weeks and was in the same class reading similar simple sentences. A rangy Southerner with an unmistakable drawl read without hesitation the text book letter to "Dear Nellie," which his sixth grade was studying. He is from Birmingham, Ala., and had nine months schooling before he enlisted.

These are but random cases jotted down in the course of recent observation of the barracks school rooms. Dozens of others might be cited, but they would differ mainly in the length of time in this country and the length of service in the army. Every one seems eager to learn the extremely simple things taught in Uncle Sam's new schools. The spirit of the men is excellent. It is no child's play for young men who have reached their majority to settle down to learn what could have been learned in the first four grades of public schools. They are there to learn and most of them are doing it in creditable fashion. After completing the six rudimentary grades they may continue in some branch of vocational training if they expressed a desire to improve their knowledge in a given trade when they enlisted.

When these recruits have served the years they are willing to devote to their country's military establishment they will return to civil life not only soldiers but citizens. No other country has undertaken such an educational program in training men for military service. Uncle Sam is teaching the snap and cadence of the military step, but best of all he is preparing to graduate men from his army to good citizenship with hearts and minds attuned to the cadence of genuine American life.

### Crowning a Pagoda

A CURIOUS festival was held not long ago in Mandalay, the chief town of Burma. A new pagoda dedicated to the Buddhist religion was to be completed by the placing of a huge crown or tiara upon its summit, more than 200 feet above the ground.

To witness the ceremony came Buddhists from Indo-China, from the Himalayas, from Laos and Chan and Shan. Warriors from Katschin, sorcerers from Mien and people from other places made a medley of languages like that at Babel.

On a street corner would be seen a barber pulling a customer's tooth. On another corner a Mohammedan bird dealer sold caged parquets to Buddhists who bought them free. At very modern booths one could buy ice cream, soda or tea. Mandalay was a gorgeous spectacle and the new pagoda was the centre of it.

Every pagoda has at its summit a thiocap, the placing of which is often a Herculean task. The one now to be raised weighed several hundred pounds and consisted of a gilded ball and crown and a great spindle above it.

To get it to the top an inclined plane of bamboo scaffolding like a huge toboggan slide had been built, and was decorated with silk flags and umbrellas. Up the inclined plane the heavy cap was slowly pulled up. Six days were required for the ascent and a seventh to fasten it in place.