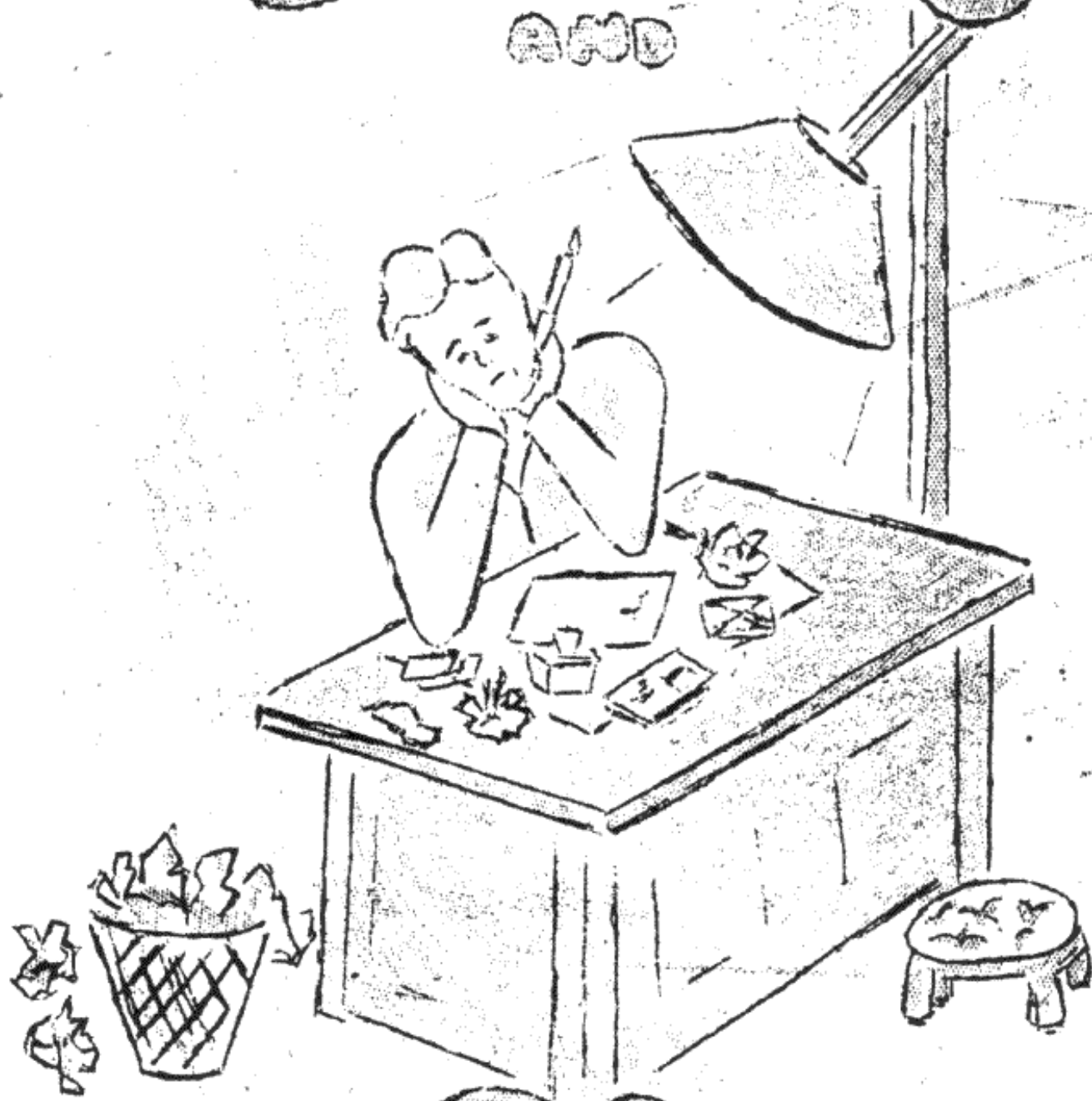


GRAM

AND



PRAM

CHAINS AND PAINS

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Policy: No orders, nothing official.

Chain stables announces the arrival of an heir to Sweet Sue, the star mare of the corral. Oh yes, it will take place next year if everything went off alright in this week's mating. This announcement is in the best Hollywood style, where the star's press agent announces, "Linda Glittering's going to have a baby." Even before her husband puts his pants back on.

Col. Anderson is protecting the food supply of the civilians in the Battalion Area by keeping the ex PW's on the move and not allowing them to loiter here and consume the limited supply of estates. It also serves to cut down the competition for women which was beginning to worry the Chainsters.

HAULING A CIRCUS TO GOTH!

Nothing surprises a Chain truck driver. Not even elephants in place of pioneer chests or horses in place of PWs, or trapeze artists instead of DPs, or monkeys in place of gravel. We haul anything is their motto. And then for assistant drivers they get brown skinned hoochy-cootchie dancers, jugglers and animal trainers. Calm men like Red Burns, Terril Benzing, Scott and Wood say it's just like home - home in a madhouse!

What's in store for Chainsters? Be honest! Maybe it's death. Some of the men with brothers in outfits stationed nearby in Germany, want to see them. They and their brothers may never see each other again. One or the other may "get it" in the CBI. The chances of having the same furlough time in the states is against the law of averages. Can't some way be found so they can see their close relatives here in this theatre. Other outfits manage to do it. Ellis's brother has been visiting him for three or more days over at A Co. Even if it takes a lot of extra trouble and a few days from training, can't it be done?

Come to think of it, a Red Cross Gal's life is very much the same day after day. She passes out doughnuts and makes conversation. Maybe they have a manual that tells of stunts to break up the sameness of their visits - or maybe the little girl thought it up herself.

The little girl in dark glasses had a brainstorm this week, she went to C Company and announced she was going to cut hair. Did anyone tell her she had to have Capt Talbert certify her first? No. C company neglected even the simplest precautions for the health of Bowen who was to be her victim. Would she have been seen with him at a dance after she got thru with him? Probably not, because Bowen got the Company Barber to repair the damage.

Nothing daunted the little girl in glasses cut hair in A Co. Bouvia is reckless. He let the scissors fly over his brown locks and smiled bravely. He missed the touch of her gentle hands which was what he expected. With arm outstretched as if Bouvia was poison, she clipped the hair where it stood out the longest. Never once did her little hand touch him and send quivering sparks down his spine. A McCormack reaper would have given him just as big a thrill.

Bee Company was not home when the Red Cross arrived. No one got a haircut there but pop DeHeaven said he'd have been willing. Considering the shiny reflection that takes the place of pop's hair, petting the roots was all he could expect. Maybe that stunt wasn't in the manual.

He claimed he didn't fraternize with German women ---only Russian and Polish women. "Can you tell the difference?"--"I guess I can", he grinned.

SUNDAY IS FAMILY DAY

Thinking of his kid, he tosses a pack of gum to four little kids "fur the klaine Kinder", he says heving no liking for the adult Germans sitting with the youngsters.

The tot passes out a stick to each kid - and then one to her mother who accepts it. He felt momentarily angry with the woman for taking it, and then sentimentally realized his kid would share anything good with her mother and would be hurt if Mommy didn't share her pleasure.

Two years absence made him hope his kid was showing her mother some of the kindnesses he used to shower on her himself. When youre in love with an absent ideal it's good to dream that your kid, part of you, may be doing something to make your wife a little happier when you can do nothing.

GUARD IN NEUDIETENDORF

"Whoops! I'm riding with no hands." yelled the guard on post No 5 in Neudietendorf.

"You'd better cut your monkey shines before the Colonel sees you. Don't you know this is serious guard even if it is on bicycles." The quieter guard cautioned.

"Serious, my eye. Watch me present arms to some Major at five miles an hour. See? I did it!" "You'll break your God damned neck if you don't behave yourself. You ought to be glad they got two bycles for this long post."

"Oh yeah--they were thinking about my comfort weren't they? Why didn't they feind a tandem bicycle so dopes like you could pedel while I rested. Boy do I need a rest! That Lena certainly does take it out of me."

The guard thought a minute--"You don't want a tandem bicycle for guard if you take on that bitch every night. You want a horse and carriage and a coachmen!"

"You said it, that's the first good idea I've hear from you. Can you see me sitting beck in a swell carriage with a Kreut up front. That's the way this post Number 5 should be. Wait till the next bitching session.--I'll tell the Major what he ought to do here."

His buddy laughed: "Sure youre always going to tell him----"

"Damn it--it would work and I'll bet I could sell him on it." the fractious GI insisted. "The Kreuts got carriages to take wives and puppies riding every night. All he'd have to do would be requisition seven carriages and drivers--one for each night of the week. The Kreuts could take care of their own damn horses and drive them."

He leaned back in his bicycle and almost tumbled over. "See what I mean. You can't rest here. And I wouldn't be sweating like a six day bike rider if I had a Heinie rig and driver."

"G-wan, ask the Major, Thursday." the serious guard encouraged him.

His Buddy took up the conversation: "Wouldn't we be the dudes riding like a couple kings to Buckingham palace--boy I'd take this post every night." "And Hey! After it got derk I could get Lena in the carriage too. She ain't bad, either, you oughta try her some night."

Thinking of Lena and the Carriage he was silent almost a minute as they neared the end of the guard route--and then he broke in again: "If Battalion was on the ball they'd have had carriages and horses without somebody like me heving to tell them what to do."
