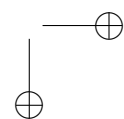
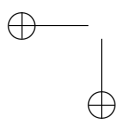
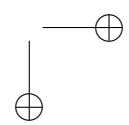
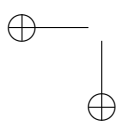
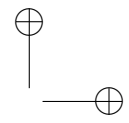
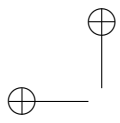
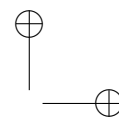


PRIVATES' LIVES



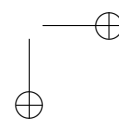
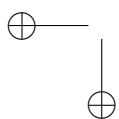


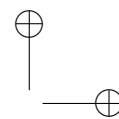
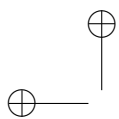


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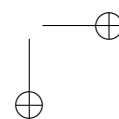
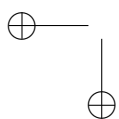
Richard Armour

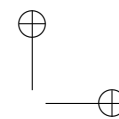
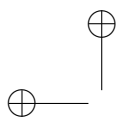
IWP





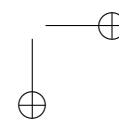
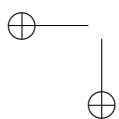
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First Published, 1944

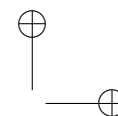
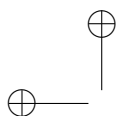




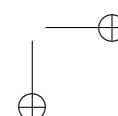
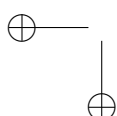
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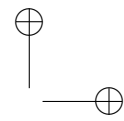
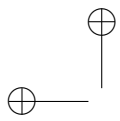
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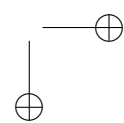
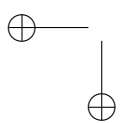


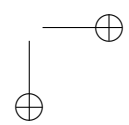
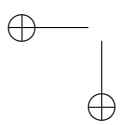
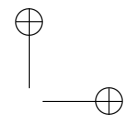
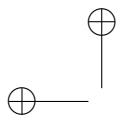
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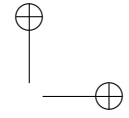
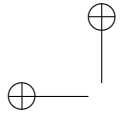




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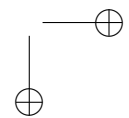
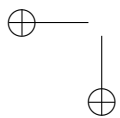


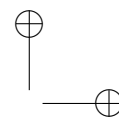
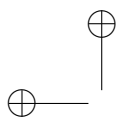




ALL-OUT EFFORT

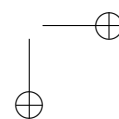
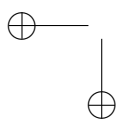
Alack and alas
For Percival Prout:
On a three-day pass
He can pass right out.

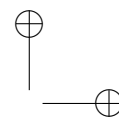
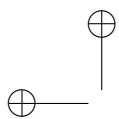




MISNOMER

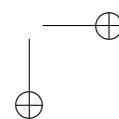
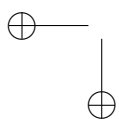
They call it the day room,
The social, the play room.
But who gets his playtime,
I ask, in the daytime?

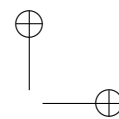
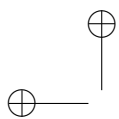




COMPENSATION

The much-lamented, poor K.P.
Has had a lot of sympathy,
As well as, from another school,
Some pretty scornful ridicule.
But one small fact should now be booked
That others long have overlooked:
To wit, that while you starve and thirst,
The K.P.'s in there, eating first!





THE M. P.

The M. P. is the Army cop,
A force for good, a moral prop.

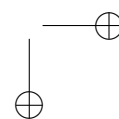
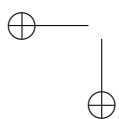
He always seems to be around
When heavy drinks are being downed,

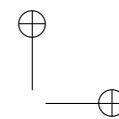
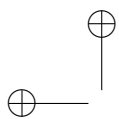
And manages to come in sight
At times when dice are rolling right.

He follows, too, a steady route
Through streets of dubious repute.

Because, indeed, the work he's in
Requires his being close to sin,

I wonder, as he watches me,
Who watches him, who's *his* M. P.?





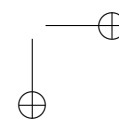
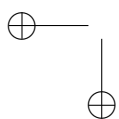
LETTER PERFECT

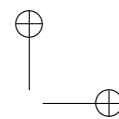
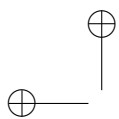
Oh, tell me who the fellow is
Who's never known to fail
To hear from friends and relatives
At each and every mail?

He's not so very handsome, and
I know his mental betters,
That's why it's hard to understand
His luck at getting letters.

He never takes a hand at craps,
He never drinks a beer,
But never does a mail call lapse
Without his shouting, "Here!"

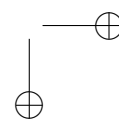
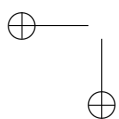
Who is he, then, and why does he
Find mail time so exciting?
Why, he's the guy you always see
Just writing, writing, writing.

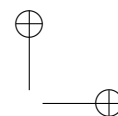
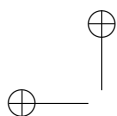




PHONEY BUSINESS

When I am old and bent and gray,
This is what you will hear me say:
I wasted away the years of my youth
Waiting in line by a telephone booth.





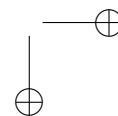
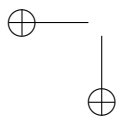
SOUND AND FURY

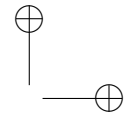
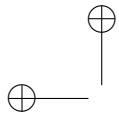
Plastic Trumpet to Save Brass Adopted by Army. — NEWS-
PAPER HEADLINE

I must confess I can't applaud
And wax enthusiastic
About a trumpet carved and sawed
Or molded out of plastic.

Nor am I fully sure as yet,
Or even, frankly, sort of,
That there is not a way they'll get.
Around the stuff they're short of.

For I suspect and fear, alas,
That, when I'm sleeping heavily,
The bugler still will have the brass
To rout me out at reveille.



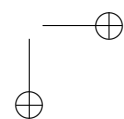
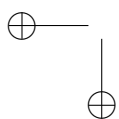


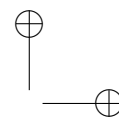
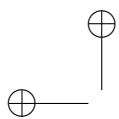
ON GUARD

When nights become dark
And frigid and sloppy,
Guard duty's no lark.
(Home papers please copy.)

Within, it's so light,
So cozy and charming,
The stove burns so bright,
The fire is so warming,

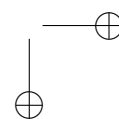
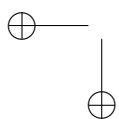
That one wishes hard,
As the evening grows drearier,
That interior guard
Were really interior.

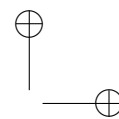
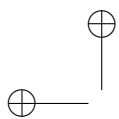




CONFINED TO QUARTERS

This, I declare,
I am standing pat on:
Headquarters is where
Hindquarters are sat on.

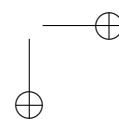
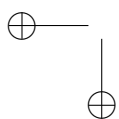


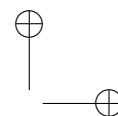
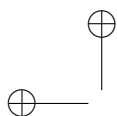


TEC 5

He wears a T upon his sleeve
With two stripes up above.
Grade five technician, I believe,
But when it comes to love,

He knows his business through and through,
And leaves the ladies weak,
For he's a fifth technician who
Has number one technique.





HI, FINANCE!

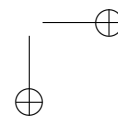
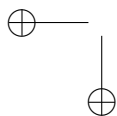
Come, captain, count the dollars out
As quickly as you're able,
And let the quarters roll about
And clink upon the table.

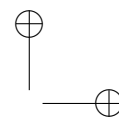
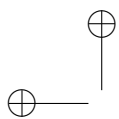
Give forth the flood of halves and dimes,
Nor let it merely trickle,
And do not fail, these parlous times,
The penny and the nickel.

Count out the cash, again I cry,
And give me what is due me.
My creditors are lurking nigh
And some may shortly sue me.

I've plans for every single cent
(Not all would suit Aunt Trilby),
And what is not already spent
I'm very certain will be.

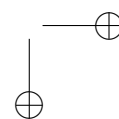
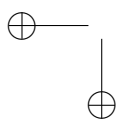
Oh, you can have your happy past,
Your tranquil, dreamed-of heyday,
But I'll take, when it comes at last,
That all-too-distant pay day!

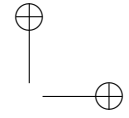
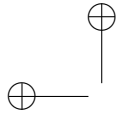




LET'S GO BUY BUY

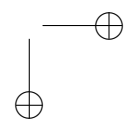
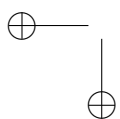
They may not be beauties
Or neatly curved cuties
But in the PX
The salesgirls are kind of
Good just to remind of
The opposite sex.

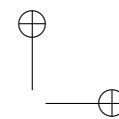
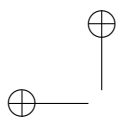




OVER THE GUN BARREL

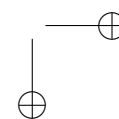
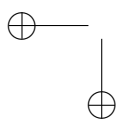
Of all the really dreadful sights
That I have ever seen,
The one that haunts me most at nights
Is guns in cosmoline.

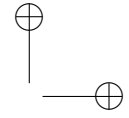
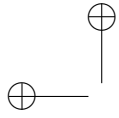




ABOUT THE SIZE OF IT

Private Twirp is a lucky man,
Match his good fortune if you can.
Rare is his case, you must admit:
His G. I. pants are a perfect fit.



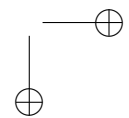
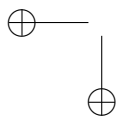


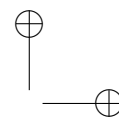
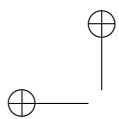
INSPECTION

Beard on the cheeks,
Mud on the shoes,
Bathless for weeks,
Odor of booze,

Spots on the tie,
Rifle with rust,
Cap set awry,
Look of disgust,

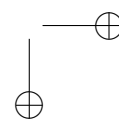
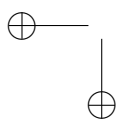
Buttons undone,
Hair as if wigged –
It takes only one
To get a guy gigged.

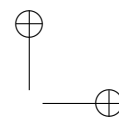
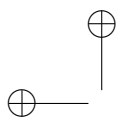




PRISONER'S SONG

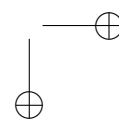
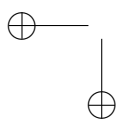
Supposing the guardhouse were no one's abode,
All prisoners granted reprieves,
Then how would the Colonel's lawn get mowed
And who would rake up the leaves?

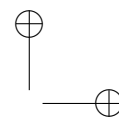
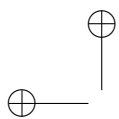




EAR MARKS

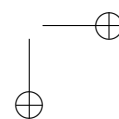
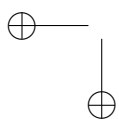
That Engineers
Have hair in their ears
Is a saying I've never forgotten,
But, private to gen.,
Artillerymen,
Though not without hair, prefer cotton.

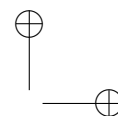
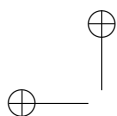




WHAT'S IN A NAME?

What once was a meal,
In the Army's a mess,
But I'd be a heel
If I didn't confess
That a guy can grow fatter
From eating the latter.





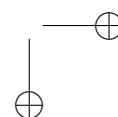
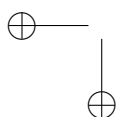
NAMING OF THE PARTS

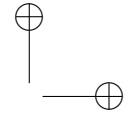
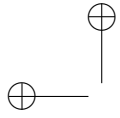
This is a model '06 body,
Food fed, with now and then a toddy.
Its maximum effective range
Is subject to repeated change,
This being chiefly on account
Of having seat and bipod mount.

This globe or spheroid is the head.
Remove it, and the body's dead.
Its function, as the experts reckon,
Is principally to keep the neck on.
And though some teeth come out with gripping,
This is the limit of field stripping.

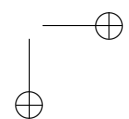
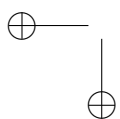
This cylinder or tube's the neck,
With which the head can nod and beck.
It also joins the head and trunk.
Without it, then, they'd both be sunk.
This cam that rises when I swallow
Is Adam's apple, if you follow.

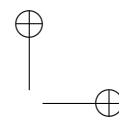
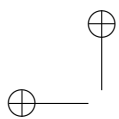
This next group is the trunk or torso,
As full of parts or even more so.
The levers on the sides, my friends,
Are arms, with hands upon the ends,
While in the trunk are many organs,
Some working well, some not such bargains.





This is myself, this is my nature.
These are my parts, with nomenclature,
And I have told, without compunction,
The major facts about their function.
As gun-wise thus I disassemble,
Look on me, fellow men, and tremble!



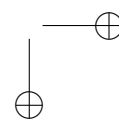
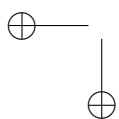


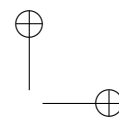
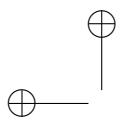
LINES TO A SETTING-UPPER

Make us raise our arms to thrust,
Make us sideward wend,
Twist our necks or finger flex,
But nix on deep knee bend.

Exercise our trunks at will,
Ligaments will mend.
Straddle hop is bad, but stop
Before the deep knee bend.

Make us stretch and leap and stoop,
We're right with you, friend,
But to thrive and keep alive,
Forget the deep knee bend!

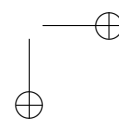
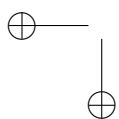


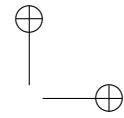
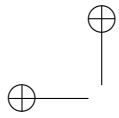


MAINTENANCE OF THE PIECE

Guns and gals,
It's well to mention,
Both, my pals,
Require attention.

A gun will rust
If unattended,
A gal will just
Say, "All is ended."





WOMAN IN WHITE

She eyed me, and,
 With grace and charm,
First held my hand
 Then stroked my arm.

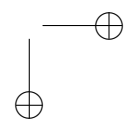
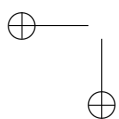
She came up near,
 Stood by my side,
Assuaged my fear,
 Renewed my pride.

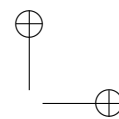
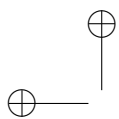
Just when it seemed
 We'd go ahead,
Like things I'd dreamed
 About or read,

She left me there,
 My heart aflame.
(I had a scare,
 But back she came.)

Then as I thought
 And hoped she would,
Since I had sought
 It for my good,

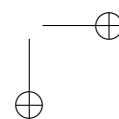
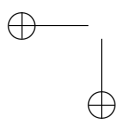
This time, sans sigh
 Or hesitation,
She gave me my
 Inoculation.

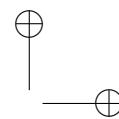
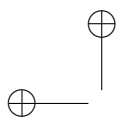




G. I. HAIRCUT

Who is bald and who is not?
You still don't have to guess,
But when the barber's bolt is shot,
The difference is less.

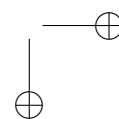
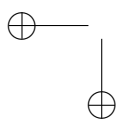


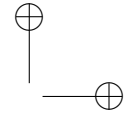
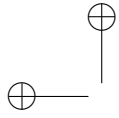


BULLETIN BORED

The notices up on the bulletin board
Are withered and tattered and yellow,
And he who leaves nothing unread or ignored
Is a very persistent young fellow.

The reason, of course, why this statement is true,
And that sharp-visioned looking behooves one,
Is that everyone sticks up a notice or two,
But nobody ever removes one.



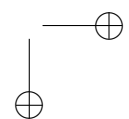
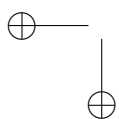


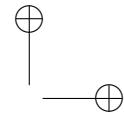
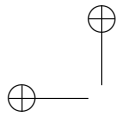
HARD LINES

Lines at every chow call,
Lines in the latrine,
Lines at all the movies,
Longest you have seen.

Lines at service dances,
Prevalently stag,
Lines before each phone booth,
Lines that zig and zag.

Lines at ticket windows
When there's leave to wend,
Lines – and I am always
Somewhere near the end.

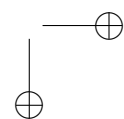
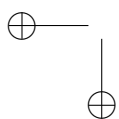


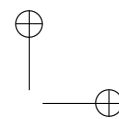
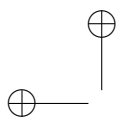


DOUBLE-DECKER BUNK

The upper bunk is a perilous spot,
Its hazards you cannot ignore;
The margin of error is not such a lot,
And fatal's the fall to the floor.

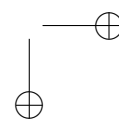
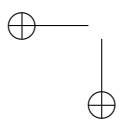
But the upper bunk is as high as they go,
The ultimate, topmost place,
And there's no one above to descend with his toe
Pressed smack on the lower chap's face.

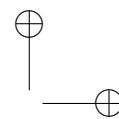
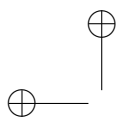




A WORD TO THE WISE

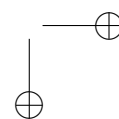
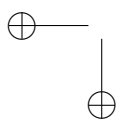
No matter how spouted or bellowed or shouted
Or scowlingly, howlingly hissed,
Of all of the words at the top-kick's command,
The sweetest, by far, is "Dismissed!"

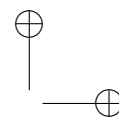
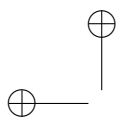




JOHN

Than John, all admit, there's no homelier bloke.
His face is a kind of a practical joke.
His chin is too little, his ears are too much,
His skin's not the kind that a woman would touch.
What teeth are not missing, stick straight out ahead,
His hair is a violent, passionate red.
His eyes are set close and his nose is too long,
He hasn't a feature that isn't all wrong.
Which should be sufficient, without further word,
To come to our climax about this rare bird:
There's none in the Army to match our man John,
Whose looks are improved when his gas mask is on.

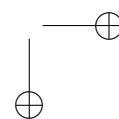
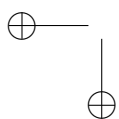


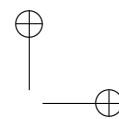
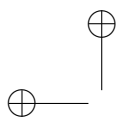


COINCIDENCE

One thing I'd like to understand
Some time before I die,
And know if accident or planned,
Is why, goddamit, why

The water's always piping hot
At every other hour
Except upon the very dot
When I step in the shower!



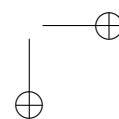
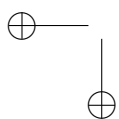


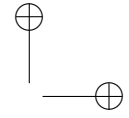
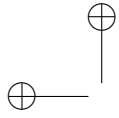
IN A LIGHT VEIN

Blood types are A and B and O.
Who gives to whom, I do not know.

But I am sure that you'll agree
You'd just as soon not give to me.

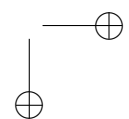
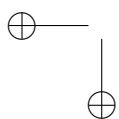
And be my blood the best or not,
I'm satisfied with what I've got.

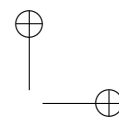
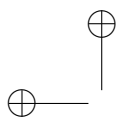




GETTING A BREAK

If one thing is certain contentment to make
And unanimous favor to win, it's
The generous use of the ten-minute break
That lasts about twenty-five minutes.

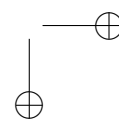
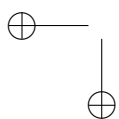


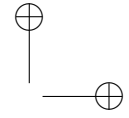
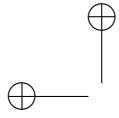


A SMALL PERCENTAGE

Some guys can get to feeling good
On 3.2, I've understood,
Can get to slapping backs and singing,
Can start their weary spirits winging.

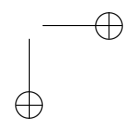
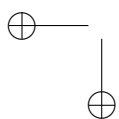
If this be true, right off the bat
I bow down low, remove my hat,
And offer my congratulations
To all who've such imaginations.

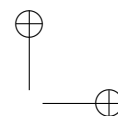
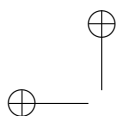




THE COMPANY CLERK

The company clerk
Is an ample-beamed jerk
Who in manner uncanny
Sits for months on his fanny.





IN THE BAG

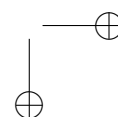
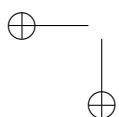
One thing I'd like to know, I swear,
Before I grow much older
Is what is in those bags Wacs wear
Suspended from the shoulder.

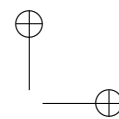
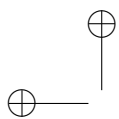
Do they contain, I wonder, maps
With all the facts essential
And documents of state, perhaps,
And papers confidential,

As well as sterner stuffs of war
Like arms and ammunition
And knives and bayonets used for
The close-up combat mission?

Or are they filled, and filled too much,
As once was their department,
With powder puffs and rouge and such
A feminine assortment?

I do not know, and it may be
I'll never probe the matter,
But till I'm told or, better, see,
I'm guessing it's the latter.



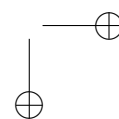
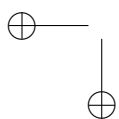


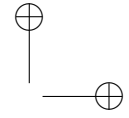
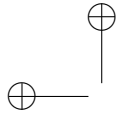
FIRING LINES

The rifles spat, the aim was good,
And missed me by mere inches,
But there I resolutely stood
And thought, of all the cinches!

The bullets whizzed above my head
And whined on ricocheting,
But none about me fell or bled,
As safe as if a-Maying.

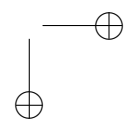
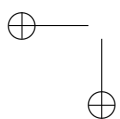
It would require no brains or guts
Were this as bad as war gets.
(Or so it seems in rifle butts
While pasting up the targets.)

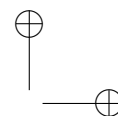
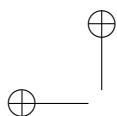




SHUT OUT

There's no need for more,
Here's the whole sad story:
On the PX door,
"Closed for inventory."



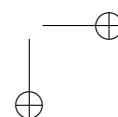
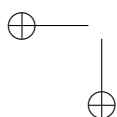


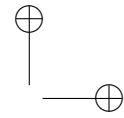
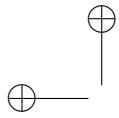
BUFFALOED NICKELS

Consider the fellow of slender means
Kept slenderer still by the slot machines,
Led on by a hope that he long has had,
To wit, that his luck can't be always bad.

Just one more nickel, he swears, and he's through,
For surely his twenty-for-one is due.
Just one more nickel, it's going fast,
Just one more slug, and one after the last.

And then, when he finally walks away,
What happens, unhappily, day after day?
The next fellow up, an unspeakable crackpot,
Drops one cautious nickel, and out rolls the jackpot.

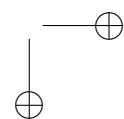
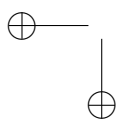


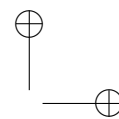
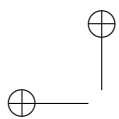


PIN-UP PICTURE

It hasn't much value,
It's not much as art,
But each time I see it
It quickens my heart.

The subject's a stranger,
I don't know her name. . . .
Not much of a picture,
But boy! What a frame!!

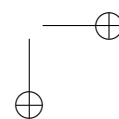
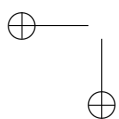


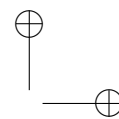
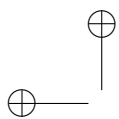


CLEANED OUT

Your shirts are streaked and spotted,
Your jacket's stiff with grease,
Your cap is stained from sweating,
And nothing has a crease,

Your pants are soiled and baggy,
Your blouse is like a sack,
And God knows when the laundry
Will send the others back!



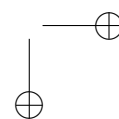
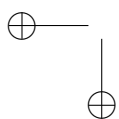


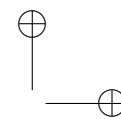
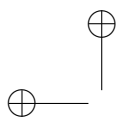
PRIVATE PROPERTY

Non-coms have their chevrons,
Lieutenants have their bars,
Colonels have their eagles,
Generals their stars.

What, then, has the private
Fastened to his arm,
Or resting on the shoulder
Of his uniform?

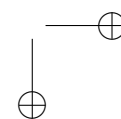
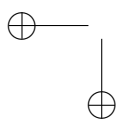
Only this (but tell me,
Who'd not like the same):
On his arm or shoulder,
One delicious dame.

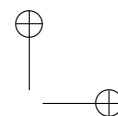
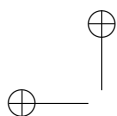




THE BARRACKS BAG

A hank of rope and a hunk of rag
Is all that there is to the barracks bag.
It has no front and it has no back,
Its lines resemble a gunny sack,
It has no lock and it has no key
To give it the slightest security,
It won't take stickers like steamer trunks,
It won't lie neatly in front of bunks,
It hasn't the look of first-class travel,
And being of cloth, is inclined to ravel,
It ruins the crease and it makes a mess
Of anything having a decent press. . . .
As luggage goes, it isn't so hot,
But it certainly holds one hell of a lot.





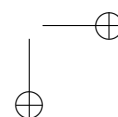
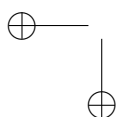
SONG OF THE LATRINE ORDERLY

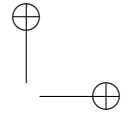
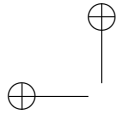
I polish the brass where I find it,
I make all the mirrors reflect,
Each toilet, I clean up behind it,
Each washbowl I closely inspect.

I labor with probes and with brushes,
I bear down with solvent and rags,
I wrestle each leak as it gushes
Whenever the joint packing lags.

I lift up the duckboards in showers,
I ream out the soap from the drains,
I work at God-awfullest hours,
And what do I get for my pains?

The dirtiest kind of retrieving's
My regular duty, alas,
And I work all the day amidst leavings
For the rank of a privy first class!





IN SHORT

This is the brief epitome
Of all you need to know:
A private has no privacy,
A doughboy has no dough.

