

1948

T.C. Talent originated in Spring of 1948 and was the first magazine published by New Haven State Teachers' College. This first issue is the origin of the literary magazine at Southern Connecticut State University, *Folio*. Both the name of the school and magazine have changed during the half a century *Folio* has been published. Student Activity records at Southern Connecticut University for 1949-50 indicate only that "*T.C. Talent* is a new literary magazine published once a year for the first time in June, 1948, by the English Department in cooperation with the Art Department." At this time, discharged service men returning from WWII joined classes of mostly young women and *T.C. Talent* was started to preserve the fading memories of the GI's before their frank, vivid, and poignant writings were lost to old timers' war time stories. Most of this first issue consists of GI authored stories. Katherine Kane, *T.C. Talent* Chairwoman, 1948, said that, it is thoroughly representative of the men and women now attending college, who have grown to maturity under the shadow of WWII. Most of the stories are dry and narrative. Perhaps it is the only way for these former soldiers returning to civilization to describe the unbridled gruesomeness of war recollections.

Selected Readings:

The Return by Charles Twyman, p. 8, 46 (cont'd)

The Fog Surrounds by Arthur Efland, p.26

Street at Night by Dorothy Thompson, p.26

THE RETURN

by Charles Twyman

We had just left the crowded, buzzing railroad station at Chicago. I know that I was definitely glad to be on my way. Yes, I was more than glad to be once again on a fast train. Thinking further about it, however, I wasn't too glad, for I had an unpleasant mission to perform. I could not ask Al how he felt, for he was riding in another section of the train; but I was sure that he was comfortable.

As we sped through the sprawling city of Chicago, I could see many people going about their daily work. We passed a large packing house about midway through town. I knew it was a packing house because I could see carcasses hung up within easy sight as we dashed along. It was good to know that here in our great meat packing center there was plenty of fresh meat for a great nation. Just after we passed the packing houses, I noticed some strange, but impressive structures, a great many of them standing silent and grey as sentinels on duty. These I found out were grain storage elevators. There must have been enough grain there to feed several nations for a year or more. I felt proud just to think that I was part of all this. Al would have been proud too.

The porter came down the aisle of the car making up berths. I was happy. I wanted to sleep. I wanted to dream about all the wonderful things that I had seen. But would I be able to sleep; that was the question. Why had I ever accepted this assignment? Oh, well, my berth was made up. All I had to do was sleep and dream. As I settled down between the cool white sheets, the rocking rhythm of the train came up to me. The mournful wail of the whistle drifted lazily back. Suddenly we crossed a bridge, the metallic resonance as we went over it gave me the clue. Soon the sharp clanking of wheel against rail was muffled. A thought stabbed deep into my brain, sharp as the tested steel of a bayonet deep in the body of an enemy. What are you going to say when you get there? What's going to be your explanation? Do you think you can sneak away without ever saying anything? Beads of perspiration came out all over my body. I began to twist and turn. Why

couldn't I have been Al? Why couldn't I just lie still and be calm and cool?

A pinkish smear was thrown across the sky. Yes, it was morning, and I was there to greet it, amid a heap of twisted cigarette butts and the odor of stale smoke. Then the morning burst out in all its splendor, and as far as the eye could see there was nothing but corn, more corn, too much corn. I wondered why the iron horse couldn't speed a little faster. I thought of Al 'way up forward. It began to get very warm.

Long before I knew it the train had gone through the grain belt. When I again looked out upon the panorama, I saw mountains, mountains of gigantic proportions and of every hue in the rainbow. Gazing at these wonderful monsters, I knew the answer. I knew what I would say.

That night I slept peacefully, aware that I would now carry out my mission gently, but in the proper military manner. The sun rose while we were still in the Sierra Nevadas. Evergreens of a stature I had never before imagined stood forth to greet me this morning. Then in too short a time we were out of the mountains. Of in the distance a town revealed its nakedness. Then we were there. For the first time since Al and I had been together, I was ready too.

I knew the little grey haired lady on the platform was Al's mother. I knew it even before she said, "Where is Al? Did you bring Al home?" I instructed the baggage handlers about the casket and busily draped the colors in the correct manner. The little lady spoke again, "Don't worry, young man. I received a letter today explaining the accident. Now won't you have something to eat?" I accepted the invitation. I was relieved now. Al had returned home--dead.

THE FOG SURROUNDS

by Arthur Efland

The fog surrounds and separates
And makes each one of us alone;
The questions rise, why were we called,
Why do we come, what do we seek,
Is there assurance we will find?

The leather scrapes against the rock
and dislocates a loosened stone;
It falls and hangs against the wall
And whistles in the dark ravine,
Below in hollow fog.
With rhythmic beat of marching feet
The questions then again repeat,
Unanswered.

The gray rocks move and make a noise

Rumbling in the ice-filled caves;
The lichen stains that blotch the rock,
The sun-scorched grass that filters dew
Help ease the gray of rock and fog.

We go, we go, we do not know,

We ask ourselves, we cannot tell,
We say we seek the highest peak
The final rock that catches light,
That catches snow in colder time;
We go, we go, we dare not ask.

Where does this insane rock-trail lead;
Ahead is yet a steeper climb?

Why do we fight, what is our gain,
Another peak hid in the clouds,
A useless pile of idle rock?
We go, we go, we do not know;
We seek that we may find a sign;
We seek that we may find a goal.

STREET AT NIGHT

by Dorothy Genevieve Thompson

The silent roar swells--
 pushes upward against the crushing pall,
Shuffling ; hesitant ; staccato ;
 Counterpoint of life:
 The feet of men going nowhere

In the crevice of civilization--
 caged by nature perverted by itself,
Inexorable ; futile ; pitiful ;
 Gesture to infinity:
 The walls that men build

A path of blood, of tears--
 spilled by flickering colored lights,
Brilliant ; puny ; ghastly ;
 Darkeners of darkness:
 That show the way to men

Caught in the tawdry chaos--
 hurrying from obscurity to obscurity,
Intent ; logical ; afraid ;
 Not looking at themselves:
 Men who will not see.

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1949

Much of this issue appears to deal with the emotional distress encountered upon the soldiers' return from WWII. "Many questions seem to be asked: "What did you do to help win the war?" "Who was waiting for you at home?" and "Were they there for you when you returned?" The work contains a great deal of bitterness and resentment, depression and disappointment.

Selected Readings:

For whom, my darling by Charles Twyman, p.29
The states-side soldier by Peter Orlando, p.36

FOR WHOM, MY DARLING?

by Charles Twyman

The nights were hot and I
dreamed of you.
The days were long and I
thought of you.
My bed was the ground, my
canopy the sky.
For whom, my darling, did you cry?

The skies were dark, your image
was there.
The scent was death, your perfume
was everywhere.
My wine was water, brackish,
colored with clay.
For whom, my darling, did you
pray?

My music was the booming
of guns,
Terrible tunes from which I
could not run.
Dancing there, was to dance
no more.
With whom, my darling, did you
glide on the floor?

The moon cast a dark shadow
on me;
A flash, horrible, quiet -- I
could not see.
For whom, my darling, did
you wait?
Wait not for me.

THE STATES-SIDE SOLDIER

by Peter Orlando

What did you do in the great war, Daddy?
I fought the battle of Fresno.
That was the goriest battle of all.
I'll lick any man that says, "No."
Were you there at Salerno, Dad?
Did you kill at Cassino?
Once I toured a grape-squeezing joint
And killed a bottle of vino.
(Question, Question)

What did you do in the great war, Daddy?
Were you a bold commando?
Risky my life on every obstacle course
From Fort Ord to Orlando.
What did you think of their languages, Dad?
Did you speak any German?
Learned to talk like a native, child,
At Gonzago, Purdue, and Furman.
(Keep on asking)

What did you do in the great war, Daddy?
Did you take any booty?
Once I took the place of a Wac
That went on active duty.
Were you there at Guadalcanal?
Were you hurt at Sabonga?
Once I threw my hip out of joint
While learning to do the La Conga.
(It's the only way you'll learn!)

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