

Camp Armour Is Haven For Civils

(continued from page three)

graduate who spends his summer at Camp Armour is eighteen. However, it often happens that juniors, and, on occasion, seniors, are to be found among those present. Since this course is compulsory, no would-be civil engineer ever tries to dodge it. Circumstances sometimes make it

necessary that a student take it later than his sophomore year and allowance is made in given cases.

There is no prevailing sanity test for admission to the civil engineering department. But if a student should express dislike of the Camp Armour summer course in a public place he would probably be adjudged insane by his fellows.

Professor Penn's course, which he has in past years taught with the aid of one or two departmental colleagues, this year had for an assistant teacher Richard J.

Hruda, a June honor graduate of Armour College of Engineering of the institute. As a junior, Hruda spent his undergraduate compulsory hours at Camp Armour; as a senior, he returned to be one of two camp stewards whose duty it is to conduct much of the administration of the camp; and this summer, as a graduate, he returned with his recent bride to demonstrate what he could teach in the tradition of Professor Penn.

Determination of meridian and latitude is made by solar observation, and laying out a meridian

from observation upon Polaris; problems in highway and railway location, including running of preliminary lines, taking topography, running in lines from paper location, and laying out simple curves and spirals are also part of the course.

Conquests Waits

The formal outlines of phases of a course in surveying give little hint of the large adventure and zest of conquest to be experienced in the field. The entire northern highland state forest tract, of which the immediate ten square miles surrounding upper and lower Trout lake are Camp Armour's classroom, is sometimes called, laughingly, "Pennsylvania," as a reflection of the tremendous influence Professor Penn has had on the entire neighborhood.

Before Professor Penn's students venture from the security of Camp Armour each morning an unvarying rite is performed. Instead of throwing salt over each shoulder, Professor Penn stamps the cold earth tentatively a few times and for five minutes becomes the Knute Rockne of surveying.

In a crisp voice, with an upward inflection, he tells what he wants done during the day. True, though it is only 7 o'clock at that time, he talks to his boys as if they were fully awake. Sometimes they are. A first bell at 5:45 a.m., a second ten minutes later, and the knell that kicks the day awake with breakfast, at 6 o'clock, seem to come in rapid order. Breakfast, in which student waiters Jeeves-about like dervishes, is history by 6:30 a.m.

Survey Groups

A common working unit is that of five men, with all units engaged on separate but related aspects of a given problem. A problem book, compiled by Professor Penn, is a standard work for the course, together with other contemporary volumes.

A what-ho spirit seems to emanate from the bands of embryo surveyors as they trudge out of camp each morning. Axes slung across hips, transits over shoulders, lines and other gear arranged with elaborate skill over leather or lumber jackets, every month carrying a pipe heavy enough to guarantee its owner is no dilettante—Professor Penn's boys will sing some robust ballad as they fade away into the forest. The spectator is reminded somehow of Morgan's men unhorsed; and that there is no strength through joy where first there is not joy through strength.

By some mysterious Atlantis instinct students stream from valley, hummock, hill and field, from swamps and brakes, from lakes and rivers where they have been taking soundings, back to camp with magical precision at 11:30 a.m. Lunch is announced by a bell that rings crazily. At 12:30 or 1 p.m., they are back at work. Dinner is at 5 p.m. and generally is so elegant as to provide an asterisk for each day of the calendar.

Social Life

From time to time, depending on the burden of work in the field, there is swimming before dinner. Generally, the day's boating, fishing or swimming occur before the sun fades, in the golden, magic time after the evening meal.

Professor Penn has seen the evolution of camp social life, from the period when lack of roads, and dependence on foot travel, necessarily confined his boys to the vicinity of the camp most nights. At present, though three or four older students might have automobiles at camp, but only on Saturday nights may they leave without permission. Functions of camp life are so interdependent,

the shadow of each social activity being intimately associated with the borrowing of a shirt, tie, or even a suit, that rarely does an individual student find a girl that does not prove to be the camp's girl, in the sense that everyone knows her and has stepped on her toes while dancing.

Camp discipline is practically student-controlled, moving with a quiet efficiency that is democratic, a process in which the cool waters of Upper Trout lake play the chastening role of judgment seat. Chiefly, there are no fights, no petty bickerings even, because there is no time, and because such a life as Camp Armour offers militates against moral weaklings or weak sisters.

End of Week

Saturday night is Saturday night, of course. It is probably the only night when it is hard to get together a five- or six-piece orchestra about the upright piano to the right of the fire place. The population of Camp Armour streams into Minocqua for the movies, into Woodruff or Boulder Junction, but particularly into Shrimp's Place, a super-junker joint, with four-piece orchestra and friendly college girls who work by day as waitresses at nearby resorts.

Coca-colas or malted milks are about what most of the boys can afford for one couple. The girls know enough not to ask for more. Camp Armour fledglings, aside from the aura of learning and dignity their tradition has given to the neighborhood, have learned always to mention the cabalistic syllables "johnschommer" if they get in a tight spot.

"Bunyan" Schommer

For big John Schommer, professor of chemistry, athletic director, director of placement and front-line personality of Illinois Institute of Technology back in Chicago, is virtually burgomeister of the whole northern lake country. He has caught the biggest fish, told the widest yarns, knows more of the indestructible natives than any man around. The past summer his picture occupied the frontispiece of the descriptive folder issued by the busiest of the resort towns.

Parents of students find a more than 400-mile-drive, or train ride, to Upper Trout lake no considerable barrier to visiting their sons. Week-ends and the Fourth of July are marked by pilgrimages to camp. Nothing, however, is allowed to disturb the strict scholastic atmosphere of camp precincts. Sunday morning finds most of the students awake for 7 o'clock breakfast, half of them hurrying off to church in nearby Sayner.

Enrollment

Student stewards employed at Camp Armour for the summer were Raymond S. Leibbrandt, a senior in September; and Robert Sundstrom, likewise a senior.

The following students were enrolled at Camp Armour during the past summer: Arthur Minwegen, Vance F. Zdarsky, John S. Jackimiec, Thaddeus R. Maslanska, Herman Tachau, John G. Kasman, Mario Silla, Irwin Lachman, Albert Schmitt, Robert V. Gerth, Melvin E. Johnson, Anton J. Groh, Herbert T. Schumann, Jr., Raymond W. Sauer, Frank E. Nelson, Isadore E. Kriesberg, and Charles A. Fenster.

IN MEMORIAM

We of the Tech News and the class of '43 wish to express our deep sorrow at the passing of Frank Nilles, jr. chem. Frank was drowned last summer in the Burnham park lagoon.

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