

Army Opens Schools For Illiterates

Fort Ontario (AP) — Uncle Sam, chalk dust whitening his vest, has become a full-fledged teacher of reading, writing and arithmetic to thousands of educationally-underprivileged soldiers.

At this oldest garrisoned fort in North America, built in 1755, the Army Service Forces has opened a "little red schoolhouse" designed to educate such recruits to the equivalent of a fourth-grade education.

The pupils at this and other schools opened at Camp Bowie, Tex., and Fort Ethan Allen, Vt., are the thousands of men passing through draft boards who cannot read or write English, because they lacked schooling or were foreign-born.

Besides native-born Americans the enrollment embraces Italians, Chinese, Germans, Yugoslavs, Hungarians, Indians, and Central Americans. Many are foreign college graduates. One is a Chinese playwright.

The soldiers undergo an intensive eight to 12-week course in the three R's, plus almost full basic military training.

One of the responsibilities of the Army Service Forces is the proper placement of each man in his permanent military assignment. He is given the same examination he was given initially at the reception center and the degree of his improvement is noted.

Some men will not succeed, as in any training course. Those who cannot meet the requirements are given further study, along psychiatric and psychological lines, and if no further training can be of benefit, such cases are then considered for discharge.