

RANGER SCHOOL'S A TESTIMONY TO JAMES DUBUAR'S DEDICATION

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This is an account of a World War I Army First Sergeant who had a lasting effect on my life.

He was James F. Dubuar and our paths crossed in 1950 at the New York State Ranger School. He joined the staff in 1919 as an Associate Professor of Forestry. In 1920, he became Acting Director and served as Director from 1921 to 1957. He established standards and traditions that endure today.

I suspected him of being quintessential first sergeant long before my suspicions were confirmed. He ran the school with a discipline and order reminiscent of the military. In typical military fashion, you followed orders right or wrong and complained later – if you dared.

He was dedicated to his work and extremely proud of the reputation his graduates enjoyed whether it was further academic training or in the work place.

His temper was legendary and his dry sense of humor did not extend very far if he thought you were infringing in any way on the established operation of the school. The military veterans were quick to perceive the situation and act accordingly. Many younger members took longer to adjust and a higher proportion of them fell by the wayside.

We were allowed no cars while at school or radios in our rooms. There were no bull sessions or congregating after the 7 p.m. bell. Seats were assigned in the dining room and no one was seated until the assigned staff member took his place. Dorm room doors were left open every morning for inspection. If you were called on the carpet, it was better to take your medicine and forget the excuses.

An altered sign in the bathroom was good for a full hour of upbraiding and the fallacies of trying to “pry chinks in the armor.” The sign was “Please do not put cigarette butts in the urinals.” The words “It makes them soggy and hard to light” had been added.

An empty whiskey bottle discovered in a trashcan was good for a blistering lecture about “Booze in the building.”

I personally was privileged to the evils of not being prompt. We were directed to establish a true north/south line on the athletic field by sighting on the North Star at

precisely the moment of upper culmination. Calculation of the exact time is long and involved and we were directed to be at the field, set up and ready one half hour before the calculated time.

To make a long story short, our three-man crew arrived five minutes late for set-up time. When I heard the first word of "Get out, you're late," I was headed back to the dorm without a word, transit on my shoulder. I could hear my two younger crewmembers being chewed out from one end to the other as they tried to lay on their lame excuses. We ended up with a grade of 50 on the make-up date.

A hard, fair man, who loved his work, the school stands as a living testimonial to his hard work and dedication. To this day, I still find myself wondering how he would react to any given situation I may be involved in.

He was truly the most unforgettable character I ever knew and I am proud and happy to have known him.