

STAND UP AND TAKE A BOW, MR. HALE, SIR

There is a gentleman in Parker who runs a barber shop. His name is Andy Hale. He has three sons serving in the U. S. armed forces. There aren't many men like Mr. Hale.

Mr. Hale hails from Texas. Texas is a wonderful state, pod'nuh. That's where all the lovely bluebonnets grow deep in the heart of. That's where all the beautiful women come from, like Linda Darnell and Ann Sheridan . . . and, well, Linda Darnell. And Texas is the largest state in the Union. Naturally, there aren't many men like Mr. Hale.

As if that weren't enough glory for one man, Mr. Hale is also a man who stands solidly behind his convictions. The world might have never known, and the gem of purest ray serene that is Mr. Hale's integrity, might have remained hidden forever, if it weren't for something that happened last week in his barber shop. This is the story:

A World War II veteran spent a couple of days last week in Parker. He was on furlough from a California army hospital where he is still convalescing from wounds received one July night this year in Italy. He had ribbons and things on his chest, among them a Purple Heart medal. His face was battle-scarred and he was using a crutch, because it was his leg that got it when he stepped on a hidden landmine that Italian summer night.

Thinking he could do with a shave on the second day, he walked into Mr. Hale's tonsorial salon. Mr. Hale, a man of action (not many men like Mr. Hale), rushed over to the soldier and helped him outside. "Can't you read?" Mr. Hale asked the soldier. "Keep Out Japs, You Rats," the sign outside the shop said.

It was really funny. Here this soldier, a private named Raymond Matsuda hadn't noticed the sign. And imagine, even if he had, he wouldn't have thought it applied to him, he said later. Lord, just because he was born in Honolulu, Hawaii and got called for service in the U.S. Army and trained at Camp Shelby, Miss., and went overseas to Italy and got hurt fighting the Germans and had to lie in the mud a couple of hours before he got evacuated to a makeshift hospital--Lord, just because of little things like that, he had the incredible simplicity to suppose that he was an American. He was probably under the impression that he could walk into any barber shop in the United States and get a shave.

Like I said, it was really funny. But Mr. Hale showed him. You bet. Mr Hale taught Pvt. Raymond Matsuda to look for signs before going into barber shop. Not only Pvt. Matsuda. Why, about eight months ago there was another soldier like that, and Mr. Hale says he told him to keep out, too. Because you just can't fool Mr. Hale. He can tell a Jap. A Jap is a Jap. "They all look alike to me, He says.

There aren't many men like Mr. Hale.

Thank God.

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Keen Writing!
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