

VACATION WITH PURPOSE

By Mike Harris

The year is 1944. I had just been rotated back to the States, had returned from my first furlough and had a lot to think about. I had confirmed that my old boss was waiting for me to come back to work, my old job was mine, therefore so was the old salary. I was now almost twenty-eight, time to get married, no special prospect at hand. So, true to my nature, I sat down to contemplate the problem.

After the first flurry of nonsense I got serious. What are the ingredients of a good and lasting marriage? Respect of the intelligence of the prospective partner, a modest physical attraction, and a common background would be a plus. Where to find these attributes? Usually in the children of the friends of your parents, since it is true, "birds of a feather flock together."

I was made aware of a former classmate, with whom I was while in school a competitor, and while I would never consider her for a partner she might have some friends. While on furlough I met her where she showed up regularly at a U.S.O. She introduced me to one of her friends who I thought might fit the requirements of a good marriage partner. More than average intelligence, more than average physically attractive, actually a rather pretty lady, holding down a good job as an office manager. She had three people working under her, was the head bookkeeper and money adviser at the firm of her employment. It was just that three dates on a furlough did not make for a decent evaluation for her or me. We continued to keep in touch thru the postal service, but that was not really getting to know each other better, so I made a suggestion to create a short cut to getting to know each other better.

I suggested, when I got my furlough that she take her vacation at the same time. We both go to the same hotel, she get her room I get mine, that way we can see each other for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and dancing, sixteen hours a day. Incourting, couples date, are in each other's company for two to four hours at a time, not hard to be on one's best behavior, but sixteen hours at a time day after day and we will know each other quite well. I know that the suggestion is revolutionary, but if you are willing, it will certainly be worth the effort. She agreed and we took our vacations together. On the fourth day I proposed, was accepted. The marriage lasted sixty years.