



# echoes from the catacombs

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**B**elieve it or not, it was not all work, at Ellis Island: occasionally there were smiles and once in awhile even a laugh could be heard echoing through the "catacombs". I always liked those long passageways with their nooks and niches, for it took plenty of time to walk through them and if you were as skillful as I, you'd know that most of the "work" day could be utilized in this manner.

Somehow or other I always felt sorry for such stalwarts as Gregory, in Pay, and "Workhorse" Dunlop, in Personnel, for they were chained to their desks and couldn't WORK the alley-ways like so many of the rest of us.

I don't know whether or not you are aware of it but you'd best keep close contact with the major leagues from now on for Ellis Island produced some up and coming young baseball "greats". Neither Ebbets Field, Yankee Stadium or the Polo Grounds have ever seen stars as slick as "Sluggger" Szyllanski, as limber as "Doc" Loren or as brutal as "Blubber" Brennan.

Say, I'll give you some hot E.I. baseball dope you haven't got concerning the destination and future of all those "over the fence" balls. Fellows like Bobby Taylor, Jim O'Shaugnessy and rugged "Bones" O'Wrill, cost the taxpayers money. You probably remember that "one man" Personnel Office Anchor Watch, well, I heard that Boss Switt had those fellows out in the lifeboats with fishnets.

There's another fellow I often think about and that's Chief Miller, Master of Ceremonies of the E. I. "Showboat". He sure had a large family to look after, dressing them and making sure they washed behind their ears before being permitted

to go into town. I'll never forget the dirty trick I pulled on him. I knew he'd have me Court Martialed or at least Restricted if he found out, but I did it, I PUT MY SCIVVIE SHIRT ON BACKWARDS!

Oh yeah, how about that other young fellow who was in charge of the hotel accommodations on the island—Harry Marks. You know, when I reported to him he treated me darn nice. I asked him for a good room and he said, "Son, just take that elevator over there up to the fourth floor and take the third room on the left side of the hall. It has darn fine southern exposure." But I fixed him, I gave him molasses bars for his Bingo prizes.

Whenever I felt blue I knew where I could find some cheerful guys, towards the close of old E.I. I'd just drag myself over to the back entrance of Personnel where long lines of happy lads slapped each other on the back and chuckled over their futures as free agents. They raved about the merits of being on their own—to do as they pleased when they pleased. These guys seemed to me to be truly happy and I always figured, "Oh well, sometime my day will come too." (Everything is just as I wished, my time is my own and no employer wants it).

Another experience I wouldn't mind going through again would be sitting down to one of those turkey dinners with all the trimmings, knowing I wouldn't have to reach into my pocket to try to find a five dollar bill.

Yes sir, it was not all work and no fun at E.I. for we'll retain memories for years and years and when we start to reminisce we'll remember many events and situations which were truly enjoyable.