

GENERAL SCIENCE

Draft Test Tough

Although the AFQT is difficult if one finishes in the 45 minutes allowed, it is easy to get enough correct answers to be accepted by the Army.

By MARJORIE VAN DE WATER

► THE induction test given to drafted men is plenty tough. I know because I took it. On the other hand, it would be easy to get the small score required to pass it and get into the Army.

The test I took is the AFQT, Armed Forces Qualification Test, the source of so much controversy recently. Selective Service Director Lewis B. Hershey says that too many men are flunking it. The Army insists that it is no more difficult than is necessary to keep out of the Army men who are so stupid that they would be more dangerous to the Army than the enemy. The test is designed to pass all but the lowest 13% of men drafted.

First you work out two pages of samples. These give you a chance to learn how to mark your answer sheet so that it can be scored by machine, and how to go about solving the problems. These sample questions are answered for you, or you are given the answers by the examiner and have a chance to rub out your answer and put the right one down.

Then, at the signal, you turn the page and start in. You meet a group of questions on the meaning of words. In each case you have to make a choice of one out of four words that is nearest in meaning to an underlined word in a sentence. This was as easy as apple pie for me.

Then came a group of arithmetic questions. These were easy too.

Next were a group of patterns. Here you had to look at a design and choose one out of four drawings that could be folded up to look like the figure given at the left, that could be unfolded to form it, or that could be turned around to match it.

This job was tough for me. The psychologists say that ability on this test is a good index of ability at mechanical work such as that required in the Army.

I dare say that most of the men tested would breeze through these patterns and might have more trouble than I did with the word tests. But my impression was that even if I had been trying to fail them, the chances are I might have passed by accident. I really had to puzzle. In the whole test I missed seven questions and six of them were these patterns.

After a few of these questions on patterns you come to another group of word tests and then another group of arithmetic problems and another set of patterns. This is followed by other groups of these three types of question, each group more diffi-

cult than the preceding in an ever ascending spiral of toughness. If you finish the whole test in the 45 minutes allowed you really reach some brain busters.

But, on the other hand, it is hard to see how any school boy would fail to get enough answers correct to get the score required to be acceptable in the Army. I answered more than two and a half times as many questions correctly as are necessary to pass.

All the representatives of the press who took the test with me received scores that would make them eligible for Officers Candidate School.

I am not going to Officers Candidate School, but, except for the accident of sex and age, I might be on my way.

While we of the press were taking the test, some drafted men who had failed were being interviewed. This is regular procedure to guard against goldbricking. A few of the men were found, on the basis of their answers in the interview, to be clearly malingering on the test. They are going into the Army. A few others were just as clearly incapable of passing. One man left the Army officer in doubt as to whether he was dumb or pretending to be. He was sent back to his local draft board for investigation.

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NUTRITION

Beriberi Threat Cut

► FOR 1,000,000,000 people of the world's ricelands, a scientific experiment on Bataan Peninsula in the Philippines has offered new hope that the white, polished rice of half the world's diet will not always bring with it the crippling, killing disease called beriberi.

In two years, doctors of the Philippine Government, aided by the U. S. Public Health Service and a private U. S. foundation, the Williams-Waterman Fund, have saved an estimated 220 lives and cut the beriberi mortality rate to zero in at least

one area, by widespread distribution of vitamin enriched rice.

Nutrition specialists of the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization in Washington, although not involved directly in the two-year-old program, said the figures and results released by the Williams-Waterman Fund were "very impressive."

They said nutritional deficiencies of the Far East's rice-based diet have long been considered a top-ranking item on the UN's list of world problems. This year in Ran-



RADIOACTIVE DATING—Charcoal from three hearths (see arrow in right background) dated by the radiocarbon calendar were found to be about 5,000 years old. Taken from the Lamoka Lake site in New York State, these charcoal samples show that fishing and hunting Indians were living in New York State about 3000 B.C., prior to the New Stone Age of western Europe and about the time the Great Pyramids on the Nile were erected.