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PHILADELPHIA, PA.—You can boil down nearly all the changes that have taken place in Philadelphia since Pearl Harbor to one word: prosperity.

It's true, of course, that not every Philadelphian has shared in that prosperity. The thousands of the city's white-collar workers, like practically all white-collar workers everywhere else in the country, are finding it increasingly difficult to meet sharply rising prices with pre-war salaries. And more than 4,000 small storekeepers have been forced to close during the war because they couldn't get help or merchandise, or both.

But the jammed department stores, theaters and night spots, and the hundreds of giant war plants throughout Philadelphia give ample evidence of the prosperity that war has brought to great masses of the city's population.

You need just one set of figures to illustrate the sharp lift in the city's economic life:

In 1940 the average factory worker in Philadelphia was making $27 a week and the city's total factory pay roll was 393 millions. In 1943 the city's factory workers averaged $48 a week and the total factory pay roll was 1¼ billions.

These figures really take on life when you drive through the great industrial sections of the city like Kensington, Manayunk, Tacony, Frankford, Nicetown and parts of South and West Philadelphia. Before the war these sections were for the most part cities of dead factories. Today they are loaded with war plants and booming night and day.

The city's social life, too, has taken a terrific shot in the arm. If you recall downtown Philadelphia at night before the war you know that although it wasn't exactly the graveyard with electric lights that New Yorkers claimed it was and the people never really took the pavements in after 9 o'clock, the general atmosphere was quiet, sedate and relaxing.

You went, let's say, to a movie or to a play if any plays were running, or to the Academy to hear the Philadelphia Orchestra if it was Saturday night. After that you might have gone to Arthur's on Chancellor Street for a steak sandwich, or to the Shanghai for chow mein, to the Bellevue for a drink, or to H & H for a cup of coffee. In those days downtown Philadelphia at 2 A.M. was so quiet you could hear a girl's heels clicking a couple blocks away.

It's different now. If you're set in your ways you'll probably stick to the same old places even though they're likely to be crowded. But if you're a GI or a defense worker you're more likely to be found lining up six deep at one of the many new bars and night spots that have mushroomed since the war—places like Lou's musical bar (there are three Lou's, two downtown and one in Germantown) and others that give a kind of second-rate Times Square atmosphere to formerly quiet neighborhoods like Market Street west of Broad, and Locust Street east of Broad.

This change to a boom-town atmosphere is not restricted to downtown Philadelphia at night. It's true also of the amusement centers of North, South and West Philadelphia, of 69th Street, of Frankford and Germantown and all the other great sprawling cities within a city that make up Philadelphia.

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They tell the story of a soldier from Germantown who was released last November from the Valley Forge Hospital where he had been treated for wounds received in Sicily. The GI went down to the busy section of Germantown, popped his eyes at the crowds milling about Germantown and Chelton Avenues, and remarked: "Say, this looks just like New Year's Eve." And the answer he got was: "Every Saturday night now is like New Year's Eve."

It's a good bet that the war has changed many aspects of your girl's life, too, especially her work. Don't be surprised if she writes you that she is driving a cab or a PTC trolley, or working on a welding job at Kellet Auto-Gyro in Southwest Philly or on the small-arms assembly line at Edward G. Budd's in Nicetown. Or, in fact, that she is doing any one of a dozen jobs that would have seemed fantastic in the old days. Your girl may not look as glamorous as she used to—it's pretty hard to look glamorous in a pair of cotton slacks and an old jacket—but she's making a lot more money than she used to make pounding the typewriter or selling step-ins at Lit Brothers. And besides, with more than 200,000 Philadelphians estimated to be in the armed services, there aren't many guys left to look glamorous for. Even the prettiest girls, from Germantown, for instance (the town's prettiest girls come from Germantown, though nobody knows why), are lucky if they can get one good date a week.

Many of the city's girls fill in their social lives by entertaining GIs as junior hostesses at the various USO Clubs, like the Stage Door Canteen at Broad and Locust Streets or, if they belong to labor unions, at the popular USO-Labor Plaza located on Reyburn Plaza in the summer months and in Town Hall in winter.

Other social notes of wartime Philadelphia: There were fewer marriages in 1943 than in 1942, more divorces and many more babies.

One aspect of Philadelphia life that hasn't been changed much by the war is its politics. In the city election last year the Republicans ran acting Mayor Barney Samuel against the Democrats' choice, William S. Bullitt, former U.S. ambassador to Russia and France. The Democrats, as usual, accused the City Hall machine of being responsible for the city's debts, for bad housing and for broken-down sewers. The Republicans, as usual, won.

Other phases of Philadelphia life that the war hasn't changed: The monotony of the row houses in the great residential sections of North and West Philadelphia; the lifting beauty of the Philadelphia Orchestra concerts; the summer picnics in Fairmount Park; the walks along Wissahickon Drive; Benjamin Franklin Parkway looking down from the steps of the Museum of Art; the pushcart stands on Fourth Street and Marshall Street in South Philly; the men's Bible classes and the Sunday suppers in the neighborhood churches; the dank smell in the City Hall corridors; the "chlorine cocktail" drinking water.

Philadelphia has its post-war plans, like most of the nation's cities. Headed by Edward Hopkinson of Drexel and Company and John H. Neeson, director of public works, a City Planning Commission has lined up 216 millions worth of projects. The program, according to Mr. Neeson, could easily be extended to 350 millions.

Typical of some of the citizen reaction to the ambitious plans of the City Planning Commission is this comment by an editor of one of the town's large newspapers. "Post-war problems?" he barked. "What the hell's the use of talking about post-war problems when we haven't solved our pre-war problems yet?"

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