

Love at first sight

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said wistfully. "The first time I set eyes on her, I thought, 'That's someone for me.'"

He was persistent in his wooing, and saw her every time he could get a few days' leave.

"I told you the second night I was going to marry you," Mr. Jones reminded his wife from his easy chair, a twinkle in his eye.

Their courtship unfolded mostly through correspondence, and in one of those letters a year-and-a-half after meeting, Mr. Jones — who was serving in the military police — proposed.

Both had to endure quite a process to get married, in efforts to prove they were moral people who weren't bringing any unwelcome diseases with them.

Mr. Jones was stationed in Holland at the time and was given a seven-day leave — just barely enough time to go to England, get married and have a short honeymoon.

They were married April 7, 1945.

The food shortage and strict rations in England made a wedding celebration difficult and a cake was made possible only through the frugality of a baker who smuggled away a bit of sugar whenever possible, Ms Jones said.

A white dress was a luxury not possible, she said. A new dress took up so many of the allotted coupons that to purchase a dress that could be worn one day only was unthinkable. Instead, Ms Jones chose a more practical blue dress.

"Dad gave me his coupons to buy shoes to walk down the aisle," she added.

Saying goodbye after their three-day honeymoon was excruciating.

"I went with him to the train station and

he went back to Holland. I stood and thought to myself... I didn't know if I would ever see him again and if I'd be a young widow," Ms Jones said.

Looking back, Ms Jones said she wonders where the strength to endure came from.

"It seems impossible now that those things happened. I wonder how we got through it, but we did."

"We were just the lucky ones," Mr. Jones interjected.

Ms Jones explained people's attitudes were different back then, maybe because there was no choice.

"Even though it was a terrible war and we were bombed out of our minds, I never saw anyone feel sorry for themselves. And there were some good times," she said.

The day the war ended, Mr. Jones could finally rejoice over the fact he was alive and would see his wife again.

"It was a good feeling to know it was over with and I was still living to come home again," he said.

The end of the war meant more to Mr. Jones than a cease to the horrors with which he'd become all-too-familiar.

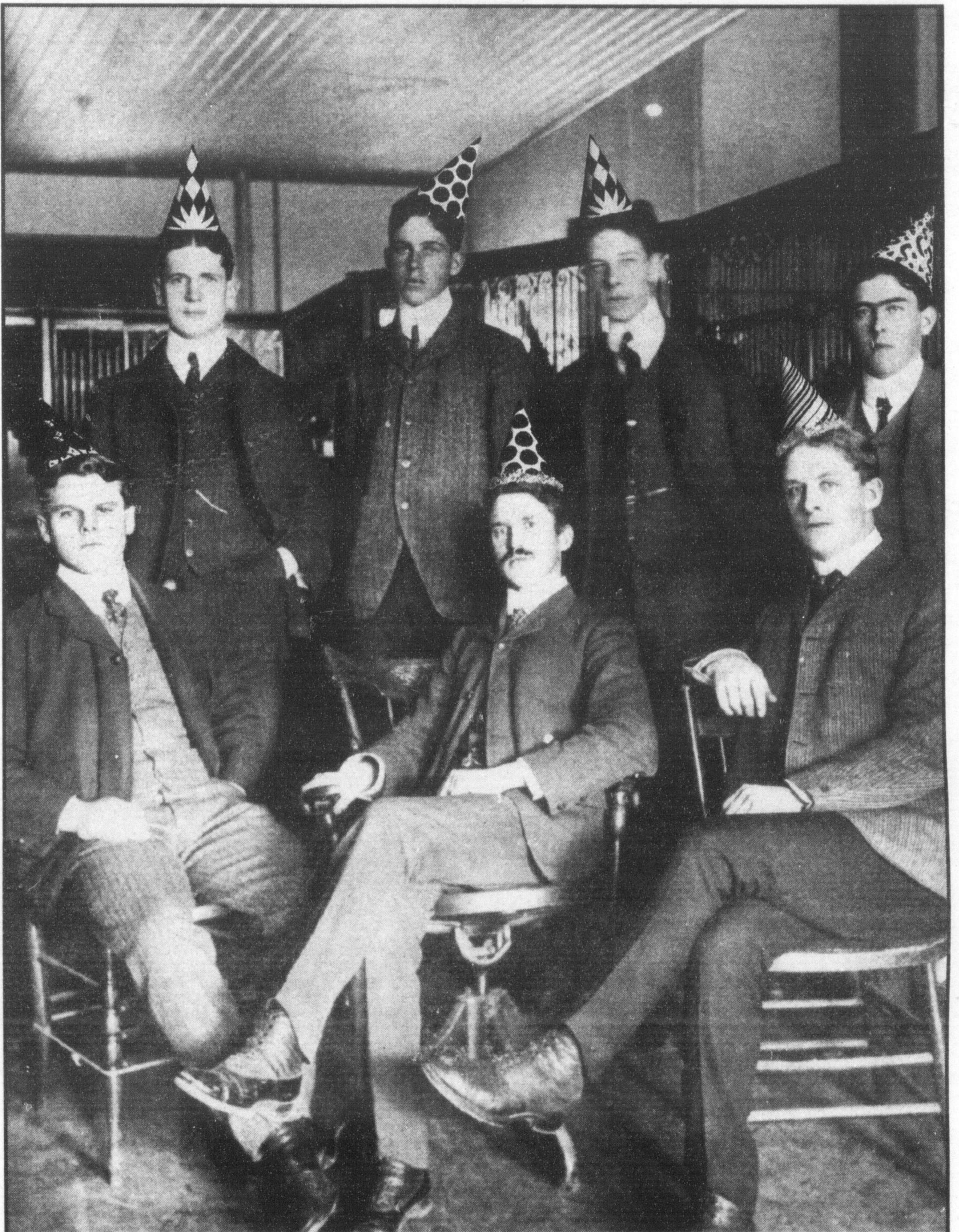
It meant he could return to the woman he loved — a woman he feels he was destined to be with forever.

It meant he could raise two fine children with her. And it meant one day he'd celebrate his 60th anniversary with her, knowing they'd triumphed together over the heartaches life had dealt.

The year the war ended was the year his new life began.

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